

# the chronicle

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## Plea for volunteers to help out at centre

A SENIOR citizens centre in Halesowen is appealing for volunteers and residents to drop by to help give the service a boost.

The drop-in centre on the Andrew Road car park has recently been awarded five stars in their health and hygiene inspection, and is urging people to utilise the daily facility.

The self-sufficient charity, which opened in 1985, continues to provide refreshments and activities for retired residents throughout the week.

Founder member Elsie Maybury, aged 77, said: "Until the demolition of the bus station we were doing great but people found it hard to access the centre while work was taking place."

"We just haven't got the numbers we used to have and it would be lovely to welcome new people to the centre; it is such a nice place to be."

The centre is run by a dedicated team of 35 volunteers aging from 77 to 88, including 83-year-old Lola Phillpotts.

She said: "We are desperate for volunteers and members because we are losing money and need all the help we can get to keep this service going."

"In its day it was very popular but numbers have reduced a lot so it is important to let people know we are still here providing a friendly and high-quality service."

### Great

Belle Vale councillor Jill Nicholls, who helped the centre get its recent council funding for vital roof renovations, said: "It is a great place for senior citizens who are on their own and the volunteers provide so much help, support and companionship for all those in need."

The centre is open Monday to Friday from 10am until 3.30pm.



Councillor Jill Nicholls, third from the left, with Senior Citizen Club volunteers, from left: Elsie Maybury, Ann Munday, Lola Phillpotts, Ruby Wrangles and Rita Hartland

## Manhole changes in metal theft fight

METAL manhole covers in Dudley are to be removed and replaced with non-metal ones in an effort to stem a wave of thefts from roads in the borough.

Around 200 covers have been stolen across Dudley over the last three weeks as gangs look to cash in on the soaring price of scrap metal.

Officers say in one week alone 77 were taken from the Castle and Priory area and from Gornal and Coseley.

Now work has started to replace those stolen with non-metal covers, and in time all manhole covers will be changed.

It can cost hundreds of pounds to repair and replace each cover and police say the north of the borough has been particularly badly hit.

Deputy council leader Tim Wright said: "It is an ongoing problem in Dudley and we are working with police to tackle it. We are looking at changing the materials in time to

### MP's demand - Page 18

something less precious." He said removing covers posed a danger to pedestrians and vehicles, adding: "The consequences could be catastrophic."

Councillor Wright also urged people who see anything suspicious or anyone who spots a cover is missing to report it to the police.

West Midlands Police spokesman Lee Page added: "We are working closely with Dudley Council to try to tackle the issue."

He also said a new police operation has been launched in Dudley called Operation Stealth. It will see officials visiting scrap metal dealers in a bid to solve the problem. Figures released last month revealed 120 drain covers have been plundered in Dudley streets in six months which left taxpayers with a bill of up to £54,000.

There have been similar problems around the Black Country.

## Hospital bosses find £7m savings

SAVINGS worth more than £7 million have now been found at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital as bosses look to trim £12 million off this year's budget. Health chiefs at the hospital say they have brought in a number of measures including reviewing every available job in a bid to save cash as well as re-tendering for equipment to see if cheaper alternatives can be found.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which employs more than 3,257 full-time staff, says it needs to save £12 million each year for the next three to four years.

Bosses have revealed they have now identified almost two thirds of the savings needed this year. Chief executive of the Trust Paula Clark said: "We are working hard towards making our cost improvement savings of £12 million for this year and have already saved over £7 million."

# DON'T CLOSE OUR HOMES - OLD FOLK



Mac Scott leads the protest outside Dudley Town Hall in a fight to save New Bradley Hall care home

ELDERLY residents joined the fight to save their care homes with a protest outside Dudley Council House. And they hit out at the authority before a public meeting, claiming there was a lack of consultation over the fate of the four homes.

The residents were among 200 people who called for the scrapping of the planned closures of New Bradley Hall in Kingswinford, New Bridge House in Coseley, New Swinford Hall, Stourbridge, and Shentstone House, Halesowen.

But council leaders said they will forge ahead with plans.

Some of the pensioners joined the protest wrapped up in blankets and with sandwiches and snacks.

They created their own placards and shouted chants as councillors entered the building before the meeting.

Friends Irene Claridge and Dorothy Walker, both aged 94, said they did not want to see all the residents broken up.

"We just don't want to move, it is our home," said Mrs Claridge, who lived in Smethwick before moving to New Bradley Hall two years ago.

"It is really good that so many of us were able to come out."

"They will not close New Bradley without a fight."

Mrs Dorne Dutton, aged 56, wrote to the Queen to inform her of the situation at New Bradley Hall on behalf

[dudleychrons@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:dudleychrons@expressandstar.co.uk)

of her family friend 73-year-old Ada Hawthorne. A reply from Buckingham Palace said the monarch had passed Mrs Dutton's letter onto the secretary of state for Communities and Local Government Eric Pickles for his consideration.

"I thought The Queen had a right to know what was going on for what good it'll do," said Mrs Dutton, of Blowers Green Crescent, Dudley.

Labour Councillor Pete Lowe, a former nurse, said people should be cared for "from the cradle to the grave".

But adult social care chief, Councillor Lesley Faulkner, said: "I would reiterate that a number of people at New Bradley when moving were advised that if they moved into New Bradley there was an idea that that care home would close."

"This care home has to close."

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## thechronicle

# Asbestos caused man's death History day event at university

A Halesowen man's job handling asbestos – first on ships including the Queen Elizabeth – led to his death from lung cancer, an inquest heard.

Black Country coroner Robin Balmain recorded that Michael Swallow, aged 69, of Acorn Road, died from industrial disease.

Pathologist Dr Sixto Batitang, of Russell's Hall Hospital, Dudley, said Mr Swallow had a

collapsed right lung and a tumour extending into his left one, caused by exposure to asbestos, complicated by pneumonia.

## Solicitors

Mr Swallow, who died at home on February 13, had been diagnosed with lung cancer in January and had given a statement to solicitors.

It detailed how he had worked

on a number of ships, including the Queen Elizabeth, in the merchant navy from 1961 to 1963.

He said in his statement that he was required to clean pipes on the ships with wire brushes and, when he later worked for a house builder, he had cut sheets of asbestos to size with a hand saw.

He had also worked in a factory where pipes were lagged with asbestos.

A Black Country history day will be held next weekend with talks on subjects including the 1910 chainmakers strike.

It has been organised by the Black Country Society, with the University of Birmingham, and will be held on October 15.

Well known local historian, Dr Terry Daniels, will start the day by talking about The Manor of Oldbury.

Chainmakers' strike heroine Mary Macarthur will be the subject of a presentation from Dr Jean Debnay, author of Breaking the Chains – the story of the Women Chainmakers from Cradley Heath.

Roger Bruton is researching the networks of intellectual activity in the Black Country in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and will give talk entitled

Not as Thick as the Ten Yard Seam.

Finally, Trevor Harris, from Newman University College, will look at the Elementary Education Act of 1870 and its implementation in Smethwick and Harborne.

The event is at the university from 10am and costs £19 to attend, including lunch. Call 0121 4158253 for information.

## Pianists strike a note for concert

Pianists from across the world are preparing to battle it out on stage in Dudley later this month.

They will take part in the annual Dudley International Piano competition which has been running for around 40 years and organisers say this year the number applying for the competition has broken all previous records.

Those chosen, one from the UK, one Chinese competitor and one who hails from Ukraine, will appear in a final which will be held on October 16 at Dudley Concert Hall. Each will have a chance to rehearse and then play a full piano concerto with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

## Play

This year's finalists are Slava Sidorenko, aged 26, from the Ukraine, Cordelia Williams, 23, from Britain and Quaojung Dai, 21, from China.

Slava Sidorenko will play Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No 1 in 'B' Flat minor; Cordelia Williams will be playing Beethoven's 4th Piano Concerto in 'G' Minor and Quaojung Dai will play Chopin's 2nd Piano Concerto in 'F' Minor.

The audience will also get the chance to choose their favourite with a £300 prize awarded for the audience's choice, while the main winner gets £3,000.

Tickets for the final range from £7.50 to £18, and £5 for students and are available from Jean Darlington on 01384 833960 or email dipsec@blueyonder.co.uk

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# Traders raise concerns on market's revamp scheme

A popular Halesowen street market will be extended to include more stalls – but the plans have been scaled back after complaints that trade in local shops would be hit.

The farmers and craft market will be allowed an extra 10 stalls selling general stock after Dudley Council licensing chiefs gave the go-ahead.

But they rejected an application to hold the market in the town centre every week.

The farmers' market currently runs an alternate Saturdays throughout the year and is restricted in the types of goods which can be sold.

The council's licensing committee heard there were fears that events such as the Victorian Street Fair or the Christmas Market could be restricted if a larger general market took place every Saturday.

Director of the market operator LSD Promotions Dermot McGillicuddy said he would work around those events and told the committee he wanted the market to become a "vital part" of the town.

Under Mr McGillicuddy's original plans, there would have been up to 60 stalls each week and they would not have been limited to selling craft or farm stock.

But the committee ruled that only 10 extra general stalls could be set up – taking the total to 35.

Concerns from traders and town centre bosses had been raised at a recent meeting,

with claims the move could suffocate narrow town centre streets.

They were also worried that stalls selling clothes and household items would put existing shops out of business.

Stuart Perry, of the council's town centre management team, told the committee: "The town centre is struggling in the current economic climate and a weekly market would be detrimental to the town as a whole."

And Halesowen chamber of trade chairman Steve Fitzpatrick said stores could end up closing down if vital trade was taken away from them.

He said LSD's market in Kidderminster often had stalls "set up in front of empty shops".

## Concerned

Before the meeting Mr Fitzpatrick said he had spoken with a number of shop owners concerned trader would be hit.

"There are enough markets including an indoor one here in Halesowen with others in Dudley and Blackheath," he said.

The committee said it would review the situation in six months.

After the meeting Mr McGillicuddy said: "I think this was a very positive decision and it will go a long way to improving what the market has to offer and it will help new stallholders start up without these restrictions on what they can sell."

## Hairdresser Helen wins again



For the second year running a trophy for Helen Tether

Halesowen hairdresser Helen Tether is on top of the world after clinching an international title for the second year running and doubling her business.

Helen, aged 29, has doubled her workforce in a year and her salon, in Queensway, employs six people.

After winning the La Biosthetique International Beauty Stylist cut category trophy for the second time, her photograph will appear in salons across the world.

And she believes her fame will bring even more customers flocking to her salon. "Winning the title last year was amazing but to do it again is marvellous," said Helen, who lives in George Road, Halesowen.

She beat 83 other hairdressers to win the UK La Biosthetique championship and was up against rivals from 14 countries in the international final, held in Paris.

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# Movie joy for kid from Quarry Bank



Film-maker Carl Tibbetts at the premiere of his movie

THE ROAD from Quarry Bank to Hollywood is not exactly a well-worn one, but a burgeoning film-maker from Dudley could be about to change all that. Carl Tibbetts, who as a youngster snuck into his local

Quarry Bank video store to watch horror movies, is on the verge of seeing his first major feature film being released nationwide. And despite Retreat being Carl's directorial debut, the film features a stellar British cast of Jamie Bell (Billy Elliott), Thandie Newton (Mission Impossible II, Crash) and Cillian Murphy (Batman Begins, Inception).

Labelled as a psychological thriller, it tells the story of Murphy and Newton - aka Martin and Kate - who flee to a remote island where soldier Jack (Bell) tells them a deadly virus is sweeping through Europe.

It is something of a dream come true for Carl, who wrote Retreat's screenplay and was the most inexperienced crew member when the film was shot in north Wales last year.

"I'm very, very excited," the 36-year-old said. "It feels brilliant to have the film about to be released."

"I've always wanted to do this - I always wanted the opportunity even when I was a kid in Quarry Bank."

He may be living in London now but Carl's roots remain very much in Quarry Bank and Dudley and he makes regular trips home to see family and friends.

Betty Guest, owner of Dudley's famous sweet shop Teddy Grays, is a relative and Carl counts music venue JB's as one of his favourite former haunts.

"Dudley is a very down to earth place, full of great people, which gives you a level head and a good grounding," Carl, a former pupil at Thorns Community College, added.

"I learned a lot about films growing up in Quarry Bank."

"There was a shop, The Marina, which turned its back room into a video rental shop in the 1980s and I used to sneak in and watch Evil Dead, American Werewolf in London and films like that. They kicked me out all the time though!"

In the 12 years since leaving Sheffield University with a fine art

By Tim Spiers

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degree, he has written numerous scripts and screenplays while editing television commercials and programmes.

But it was by chance that his Retreat script was picked up by producer Gary Sinyor, who responded to a post Carl left on a script-sharing website which read '28 Days Later meets Dead Calm'.

The process went from there with Carl given the chance to bring the script to life as the film's director, a process he relished despite being a relative novice in a room full of famous actors and experienced crew members.

## Busy

"Because I'd written it I could see the vision of it and I was very lucky that Cillian, Jamie and Thandie responded so well to the script."

"It wasn't a big chunk out of their busy schedules as we took just three weeks to film it, which helped get them on board."

"It was shot in one house though and as we were destroying the place we had to do it in one take, which presented a challenge in itself."

"So it was a baptism of fire but I think we pulled it off."

Retreat, which premiered at Manchester's Grim up North festival last week, goes on limited release tomorrow (Friday 14) for one week. It is being shown at Birmingham's AMC Broadway cinema.

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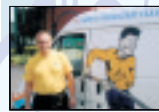
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## Hospital parking plans approved

A raft of new parking restrictions drawn up to tackle parking problems in roads surrounding Russells Hall Hospital have been given the seal of approval by councillors.

Residents living near the Dudley hospital have long complained that visitors and staff are using their road to avoid parking charges.

The proposals recently went before members of the Central Dudley Area Committee where they were recom-

mended for approval by councillors. The scheme will now go before the cabinet member for transportation, Patrick Harley, for his approval.

### Loading

The plans include restricted access to Pearce Close, Dereton Close, Elgar Crescent and Abbotsford Drive, and waiting restrictions in Middlepark Road, Bushey Fields Road, The Oval and Ashenhurst Road.

A loading ban in High Street, Pen-

snett, is suggested on weekdays from 7.30-9.30am and 4.30-6.30pm. No waiting at any time has been suggested for Tennyson Street, Milton Street, Steppingstone Street and Byron Street.

Plans for restricted access to the Kingswinford Service Road and Hilderic Crescent has also been earmarked for approval.

Calls were also made for the council to look at the possibility of residents only parking in the streets.

## New chapel work nears completion

CONSTRUCTION work on a new £300,000 chapel and community centre in Halesowen is nearing completion.

Contractors have been on site at Hasbury Christian Fellowship in Albert Road since May and have now finished the majority of the building work.

The roof has been tiled and new windows fitted to the property, which is connected to a hall at the back of the site.

It will replace the former 1938 chapel, which has been demolished, and will be used by worshippers and community groups.

### Lights

The remainder of the work is expected to be completed by December and the connecting hall will also be given a revamp including new lights and guttering.

Also, the car park will be resurfaced and native plants will be introduced.

The new chapel will be used for activities including a youth club, a pensioners lunch club, coffee morning, table top sales, dance workshops and keep-fit sessions.

It will feature a community/worship



The Hasbury Christian Fellowship site

space, offices, storage, a wheelchair-accessible toilet, new entrance doors and an access ramp.

Trustee Jeremy Howell has previously said: "This project will benefit the community of Hasbury by providing accessible and affordable meeting spaces for local groups, in particular older residents who would otherwise stay at home."

We anticipate that use will increase, improving the quality of life for people, whatever their age and background."

The church held its last service in the chapel on April 3.

Since then services have been held in the hall.

The old chapel was deemed structurally unsound and not fit for purpose after an inspection, which led to plans being drawn up for the new build.

Funding for the work is coming from several sources, including Eric W Vincent Trust, the Seth Somers Trust and the Veolia Environmental Trust.

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# Calls for support on road safety scheme

Traffic lights could be installed on a Halesowen dual carriageway labelled one of the country's most dangerous roads – if enough residents show support.

Locals will be given the chance to have their say on proposals for the A456 in Hayley Green. Hundreds

have campaigned for the last eight years for the road to be made safer.

The road, which featured in an ITV documentary in 2004, was dubbed the second most dangerous in Britain – and families have to cross it each day to reach a school. If a majority of residents back the proposals, work will get under way on a pedestrian crossing in

February. Families have to cross the carriageway to reach Lutley Primary School.

And there were fears that someone could be killed after a 91-year-old man was hit by a car at the blackspot last year, suffering a broken arm.

Letters will be delivered to thousands of homes with slips that can be filled in with views on the plans, which would see a crossing built near the junction with Hayley Park Road.

Local councillor Ken Turner, who collected more than 500 signatures said: "After eight years of hard slog we are finally getting somewhere. I am so pleased that people will finally be able to cross the road safely and children can walk to school instead of being driven."

## Consultation

"I would urge residents to make sure they take part in as we want to make sure this goes ahead."

Councillor Turner said parents and their children find it almost impossible to cross the road. There have been a number of near misses and he claims drivers often break the 40mph speed limit leaving pedestrians struggling to get across the road in time.

Councillor Patrick Harley, cabinet member for transportation, said: "A double-sided signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on the A456 Hayley Road, Hayley Green, has been supported by the Halesowen area committee. The proposal is currently out to consultation with ward councillors and the emergency services, and will be put to residents for comment in late autumn."



Bottom, from left, Kay Woodhouse, J. Paul Murdock, Stuart Lawrence, and Liz Woodhouse. Top, from left, Alyson Nunn, Adam Compton, Michelle Cassells, and Richard Cope all star in State Fair

## Musical has all the fun of fair

The award-winning Cradley Heath Operatic Society will present its latest show, Rodgers and Hammerstein's State Fair, next month.

The Black Country premiere of the show will be held on November 7 at the Civic Hall in Brierley Hill and the cast of more than 30 people will perform the show through until November 12.

Cast members have worked on a new stage version of the only film on which Rodgers and Hammerstein collaborated.

The musical highlight is due to be the famous duo's contemporary score of jazzy numbers and heart-lifting tunes including It's A Grand Night For Singing and Rodgers and Hammerstein's only Oscar-winning tune It Might As Well Be Spring.

Curtain up is at 7.15pm and to secure tickets call the box office on 0121 585 7380 or visit [chaosoperatics.co.uk](http://chaosoperatics.co.uk)

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## Tommy keeps audience tickled

Black Country comedian Tommy Mundon helped three groups raise pots of cash for people battling against Parkinson's disease at a special event.

Tommy, aged 77, of Halesowen, took to the stage at the Kingfisher Hotel, in Wall Heath, on Tuesday entertaining nearly 200 members of support groups from across the Black Country.

And it is a cause close to the legendary comic's heart as he himself was diagnosed with the condition earlier this year.

The event was the first time branches of the Parkinson's UK charity

from Dudley, Wolverhampton and Sandwell have joined forces for an event. They raised more than £300 by a raffle alone at the event which also featured a lunch and the performance by Tommy.

Funds raised will be split between the three branches for day trips and other fun.

Sandwell chairman Doreen Bastable said it had been an excellent event.

"This is the first time we have done anything like this and it went very well," she said. "Tommy was extremely entertaining as usual and got a lot of laughs."



Tommy Mundon with Doreen Bastable, left, and Eva Evans at the event in Wall Heath which brought together members of Parkinson's Disease charities from the Black Country

## New archives base gets the go-ahead

The long-awaited £6 million archives building in Dudley has been given the green light and hailed as a 'state-of-the-art' centre for future generations.

The high-tech base will be built on the site of the former Royal Brierley Crystal factory in Tipton Road, near the Black Country Living Museum.

Along with Dudley and Sandwell's archives dating back to the 12th century, it will house a local history library, a conservation studio, and education facilities such as a lecture theatre and conference rooms. It will also have solar panels on the roof.

The archives are currently based at the former Mount Pleasant School in Coseley which would be redeveloped for housing. The plans were unanimously approved by Dudley Council's

development control committee this week after years in the pipeline.

Committee chairman Councillor Colin Wilson said: "I have never known a set of plans to tick all the right boxes like this."

"The state-of-the-art technology of this building is superb and it will preserve the area's history for generations to come."

### Found

Building work will now get under way in the coming weeks and it is expected to be completed by summer 2013.

But potentially dangerous ground gases and "significant" land contamination have been found at the site, with large-scale groundwork needed before construction can begin.

Work to demolish the old Royal Brierley Crystal building began earlier this month, and investigations into the ground contamination will be carried out when the site has been fully cleared.

Part of the new premises will be rented out to Sandwell Council for storage facilities though the authority will not contribute to the costs.

It was revealed recently that the project will leave Dudley Council with a 60-year debt of £13.8 million.

The council had originally planned to build the archives centre at the Black Country Living Museum.

It would have adjoined the museum's reception but a survey showed the ground conditions were not suitable.

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# Extra £8m set to go from council budget

A further £8 million will be slashed from Dudley Council's budget next year as government cutbacks continue to bite and bring about more redundancies.

Council leaders have revealed they had begun drawing up plans for the 2012/13 budget ready for a public consultation over fresh cuts next month.

Dudley Council leader Les Jones said officers were about halfway through completing the plans. "In about mid-November we expect to start releasing information on what we hope to do," he said.

Councillor Jones said a High Court ruling against Birmingham City Council had made this year's process "much more difficult".

He said, "We have to make sure there is no specific group or sub-group that is being disproportionately affected by any single budget decision we make."

## Axing

This year, Dudley Council made £22 million of cuts, axing 427 staff posts.

"As part of last year's budget proposals the council indicated that around 800 posts would be made redundant. This was broken down into around 400 for year one, and 200 for each of the following financial years," said Councillor Jones. "As the three-year process continues we may be in a position to revisit these figures but it should be noted that in finding savings of around 460 posts this year, the total number of compulsory redundancies was kept down to 56."

"Compulsory redundancies will remain a last resort in any future staff savings over the coming year as we will continue to use a mixture of freezing vacant posts, redeployment into alternative jobs, job sharing, retirements and voluntary redundancies to find appropriate savings."

## Cash help for groups

Community groups are to get cash from Dudley Central Area Committee. Among them are Meadow Road Youth Centre, Dudley, around £1,000; The St Andrews Residents Trust, Netherton, £1,400; Dudley Counselling Centre /Dudley Christian Fellowship, £3,000; Woodside Community Association, £1,487; Netherton Regeneration Strategic Group, £5,000.

## Matthew's art in top show



Artist Matthew Hill ready to put some of his watercolours on show

An artist is celebrating after his work was chosen to be exhibited in a top London gallery.

Matthew Hill, aged 22, of Bramble Close, Cradley Heath, entered the Society of Graphic Fine Art annual competition.

His work is on display at The Menier gallery until October 15.

The former Heathfield Foundation Technology College student, who has recently completed a Masters degree in fine art at Birmingham City University, said: "It is a drawing competition that I entered a few months ago and I

have got through to the finals.

"The competition is very well established. I entered because I am part of the Birmingham Watercolour Society and they forwarded me some details about the competition and my work fitted in to what the competition is about."

"I have got through to the finals so my work is in the exhibition."

"I have got two watercolours and they are both of interiors of cathedrals - Lichfield and Worcester."

Mr Hill added he hoped to become a concept artist in the games or movie industry.

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Keeper of Geology Graham Worton is pictured by one of the information boards

## Wrens Nest heritage opened to everyone

A MULTI-MILLION pound scheme to open up Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve to visitors has reached its first milestone.

Over the past 18 months, artists, engineers and builders have been hard at work to flatten footpaths, put in new handrails, install a series of cast-iron works of art and create new viewing platforms for visitors.

The improvements are now open to the public, marking the end of the first phase of the ambitious project, which eventually aims to open up the Seven Sisters mines to canal and walking tours.

Dudley's borough geologist Graham Worton said the whole scheme had been designed to reflect both the natural and industrial heritage of Dudley.

A series of "story stones" have been installed as part of the work, telling first-person accounts of experiences of the mine. Workers are now looking to get more former miners to contribute to the story stones.

And an information board has been put at each viewing platform, explaining the science and significance behind what visitors can see.

### Special

For example, at the 'ripples' themselves, the board describes how the rocks tell the tale of the seabed it once was - from the calm surface water, cast forever in limestone, to the swirling undercurrents and busy seabed, to a layer of volcanic rock from an eruption from a long-lost volcano millions of years ago.

Mr Worton said: "Having this window on time is pretty special, there is nowhere in the world which demonstrates the course of natural history quite so spectacularly."

"What we are doing is a huge undertaking. We want it to be the first mine and quarry site which is completely wheelchair accessible. Even the canal boats will have wheelchair lifts on them."

The caverns themselves, which have been fenced off to the public for the past nine years and were filled in in 2007, now have two new viewing platforms from different angles, in preparation for when one of the



Graham Worton on one of the viewing platforms that look towards the silurian seabeds, in the top left corner, over the basin of the reserve

caverns is transformed into a modern visitor centre.

Four new trails have been opened up, taking visitors on tours looking at the various important aspects of the mines such as its industrial and natural history.

Artworks have been dotted along

each of the trails, telling many different stories about the nature reserve, including why it is important to local people.

Following the completion of the access work, Mr Worton said, the next phase will be to reopen the canal tunnels to allow boats to get back in to explore the old limestone mines.

"The tunnels are in excellent shape with very strong brickwork, and it is the next easiest step," he said.

"It also means we can get engineers in through the canal tunnels to start work strengthening the mines, which is a much easier route than having to lower everything in through mine shafts."

This phase will not get started until after the 2012 Olympics however, as Mr Worton said more public funding is expected to become available then.



One of the new signs at the entrance to the reserve



A time periscope next to a silurian seabed



One of several story stones installed around the site



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# Board members receive iPads

THOUSANDS of pounds have been spent on iPads for NHS workers in Dudley, it has been revealed. The high-end devices made by Apple can cost up to £659 each.

Eighteen of the computers have been bought by health organisations in Dudley and Walsall this year. The cost of an individual iPad is between £399 and £659, depending on the model.

Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) confirmed it had spent

around £10,000 on new technology including iPads, for each of its 15 board members, while Walsall Primary Care Trust has purchased three for its IT services.

Dr David Hegarty, chairman of the CCG, defended the purchases saying the iPads had "cost less" to buy than laptops. He said the tablets would allow members to access NHS email accounts and read lengthy documents without having to print them. Money

for the devices came from a budget allocated by Dudley PCT for setting up the board of the new GP group and had not been diverted from patient care services, he said.

One worker at Dudley PCT, who did not wish to be named, hit out at the spending, saying: "I am completely disgusted by this when people are working so hard trying to keep on top of workloads as people are made redundant with no extra pay."

## Convert to rugby too say girls

A women's rugby team in the Black Country is looking for new recruits of all ages and abilities.

The Vixens train at Dudley and Kingswinford Rugby Club every Monday night and play league matches most Sundays.

The team was set up five years ago to give mothers and wives of the men's squad a chance to show off their skills and build their fitness.

Vice captain Julie Wollaston, aged 40, said: "We are now looking for new members to join us and the original girls are now making way for new blood to join the team, to expand and to add to our squad, any experience is very welcoming."

"We're very welcoming and we all have a good laugh when we get together."

A charity match against the men is held once a year, raising cash for the fund for paralysed Stourbridge teen Callum Loveridge last year.

To get involved coach Jan Burbie on 07814321709 or 01384401356 or email dk.vixens@gmail.com



Vice-captain Julie Wollaston, centre, with teammates from Dudley and Kingswinford Rugby Club's "Vixens" women's squad, who want new members

## £1m boat is nearly complete

A £1 million powerboat is nearing completion as part of an ambitious bid to sail around the world in record-breaking time.

Workers at steel firm Micklewrights Structures on the Thornleigh Trading Estate, Dudley have been given the job of building the boat, named Good Heart, by adventurer Alan Priddy.

He hopes to beat the existing 61-day record as part of his Global Circumnavigation Challenge.

The team is now fitting out the hi-tech interior, which is inspired by the structure of aircraft wings, which are flexible and can move inches in either direction without breaking.

A total of 22 frames have been fitted inside the hull, with workers doing more than a mile of welding.

Around 1,400 man hours have been dedicated to the job which has been going on for 14 weeks and is due to finish soon.

The boat, which has been completely hand-made, is 90ft long and 16ft wide, has an estimated top speed of more than 45 knots.

The aluminium sheets for the bright red boat are being supplied by Blackburn Metals in Kingswinford.

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## Officers honoured with awards

Two officers from Dudley Police who pursued drug dealers and persistent criminals have been honoured with an award from the Police Federation.

The Copper's Copper Award was presented to Sgts Mick Wennen and Richard Narrowmore after their colleagues recommended them for their hard work over the past few months.

Since April last year, the duo have helped the Dudley Local Priorities Team make a total of 340 arrests, leading their teams to execute more than 100 drugs warrants.

They were also recognised for their dedication, team leadership and the sheer volume of crooks they arrested

for offences including robbery, burglary and vehicle crime.

The Local Priorities Team leader, Insp Harvi Khatkar, said: "Both officers have shown a great deal of motivation and passion for the role."

"They are the driving force behind this team which makes an outstanding amount of arrests. They have been involved in numerous high-profile jobs including a cash seizure of £400k, and two metal theft operations where they recovered £150,000 of stolen metal as well as £26,000 from the theft of stolen beer kegs."

In September last year, Sgt Wennen led an operation where around 87 kilos

of loose tobacco, £2,000 in cash and fake branded products were seized.

Two men were arrested on suspicion of fraud by false representation and money laundering. He also led a drugs raid last month which discovered an estimated £500,000 of cannabis in a disused garage in Cradley, next door to Overend Methodist Church.

Meanwhile, in July, Sgt Narrowmore was involved in a drugs raid which saw 50 wraps of crack cocaine seized from a house in Bunn Lane, Kates Hill. He also investigated the theft of 15 tons of metal from Midland Debur and Finishing in Bromley Street, Lye, in September of last year.

## Staff in the pink for charity appeal

Shoppers were treated to an in-store fete to boost Asda's annual Ticked Pink breast cancer appeal.

A tombola, cake stands and book sale were set up in the lobby of Asda in Pearson Street, Brierley Hill, as part of this year's appeal.

Staff were encouraged to get pretty in pink and wear the charity T-shirts to work.

Staff member Lisa Southall said the fete had been organised to help the store meet its £5,000 target. And this year's event, which raised £150, was supported by Dudley South MP Chris Kelly.

Since Asda launched its Ticked Pink campaign 15 years ago, it has raised more than £25million.



Asda workers Teresa Gordon, Wendy Cox, Elaine Rollinson, and Lisa Southall help raise cash for the Ticked Pink campaign

## A first for shoppers

Shoppers in Dudley will be among the first in the country to test a number of new facilities having a trial run at the town's new Tesco Extra store. The 24-hour store, on Town Gate Retail Park, Birmingham New Road, will open at 8am next Monday (October 17).

A Regis beauty salon, interactive Technology Zone, nutri-centre and Domino's pizza takeaway are among the new services on offer. To mark the opening manager Steve Goswell and his team will be joined by the Mayor of Dudley at 10am to launch a morning of celebrations.

The store will also make two £500 donations to local charities The Zone and Langstone Society.

## Hospice care week drive

Mary Stevens Hospice in Stourbridge is joining forces with other hospices across the UK to launch the first ever Hospice Care Week.

Running this week, it is hoped the event will raise awareness of hospice care and address the misconceptions that people may have about what hospice care is.

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**Betty is free from pain after having implants**

A WOMAN who had suffered years of pain with two jaw conditions has finally found relief after undergoing dental implant surgery.

Betty had worn dentures for many years but developed neuralgia and her trigeminal nerve had become inflamed.

"I had terrible jaw pain and suffered pins and needles in the side of head and tongue. It's a terrible condition. I'd had an MRI scan and seen a specialist but was still without relief," she says.

Clinical dental technician Mr Burchell had made dentures for Betty seven years ago and she returned to his clinic to inquire about a new prescription because the lower denture had lost its stability.

"I had put up with the floating effect of my lower denture and needed to address the problem. My lower gum has receded so much my denture was pressing down on a nerve and causing me pain," she adds.

"Steven explained the benefits of implant-retained dentures and told me it would allow my bite to be opened some more. Since having the implants on my lower denture, I have experienced no more pain."

Mr Burchell said all dentures have a shelf life and Betty's denture problem was due to shrinkage of her gums – a naturally occurring aging process.

"We hoped for an improved outcome on her condition, but never dreamed that the final clinical result could be so rewarding with Betty being free from pain," he added.



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## Transformations

## Suction is new solution

**A** CUTTING-EDGE development to help resolve the stability problems faced by thousands of denture wearers is being offered at a Dudley clinic.

Denturist Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng), who heads the team at the Denture Clinic in North Street, says the invention has the potential to improve the life quality of patients who previously have experienced long-term problems with ill-fitting teeth.

Prosthetics are held in place by tiny valve-operated suction devices which are built into the dentures.

A clever diaphragms principle, triggered by the bite pressure on patients' gums, creates a 'sucking' vacuum between the soft-tissue mouth lining and the prosthetic.

Mr Burchell, whose clinic attracts patients from as far as Spain, the Isle of Skye and the Isle of Anglesey, adds: "The denture revolution is evolving at a

pace. In recent times we have seen what I can only describe as strident steps forward with implant-retained dentures coming into main-stream dentistry, clever technology which allows excellent fitting outcomes and now the Ultra Suction product.

"Implant dentistry is not suitable for everyone, neither is it all patients' first preference.

"The beauty of this technology is that it offers excellent denture retainer qualities without the complex clinical procedures which are required for implant work.

### 'Toolbox'

"We have always endeavoured to be on the very cusp of clinical development and this is another tool in our commitment to always try to deliver results which are greater than patient expectations."

Historically, lower dentures can present stability problems as the jaw bone erodes with age. With

traditional dentures this can cause lower teeth to move and create friction problems on gums.

Mr Burchell adds: "The device can be mounted on upper or lower palates and because of its efficiency allows us to consider a reduction in the size of the acrylic 'plate' which can result in improved speech and taste.

"The Ultra Suction kit increases the options in our clinical 'toolbox' and can provide affordable solutions to many patients who would not wish to pursue the stability resolve with implants.

"I am passionate about the transformations good prosthetics can achieve. You can regularly turn the clock back ten years on someone's face – without the pain of plastic surgery."

Typically, patients will be encouraged to contribute their views to treatment plans and generally be assigned more than three-and-a-half clinical hours in achieving the best possible outcome.

Denture Clinic consultations also at Parkside Dental Practice, 7 Park Rd West, Wolverhampton, WV1 4PS





Tony Whittaker with the memorabilia which belonged to boxer Joe Attwood

## Tony boxes clever

A businessman from Brierley Hill has been revealed as the mystery collector who snapped up boxer Joe Attwood's gloves and medals – just days after forking out thousands to for another fighter's Lonsdale Belt.

Tony Whittaker paid £1,600 for a collection of personal memorabilia that belonged to Halesowen-born Joe. The 60-year-old bid anonymously and has now revealed himself as the buyer. He is now building up his collection of boxing artefacts after spending £30,000 on "Gentleman Jack" Hood's belt two weeks ago.

Mr Whittaker said he wanted to "help preserve another bit of Black Country history" for the future.

## Pensioner found in woods took own life

A Brierley Hill pensioner found in woodland with multiple, self-inflicted stab wounds became paranoid because he thought he had cancer, an inquest heard.

But no trace of the disease was found in 77-year-old Desmond Hill, of Brick Kiln Court, Mill Street, the hearing in Dudley was told.

Mr Hill's partner, Pauline Handy, of Envile Street, Stourbridge, wept after telling Black Country Coroner Robin Balmain: "The seed that he had cancer was planted and it took root. 'I wish my Des was still here. My life's been ruined.'"

The inquest heard that Mr Hill, a retired factory supervisor, was found lying in woodland off Ridge Hill, Wordsley, on April 30.

He had been reported missing, left suicide notes, and two kitchen knives were missing from Mrs Handy's home.

Pathologist Dr Sixto Batitang said the injuries included 10 wounds on the left side of his neck and seven on the right.

The cause of death was shock as a result of multiple wounds.

Mr Balmain recorded a verdict that he killed himself, saying: "It seems that his motive was he was convinced he was seriously ill."

Mrs Handy said Mr Hill had been a happy and cheerful man. "He was an award for being a good neighbour and he gave me the happiest days of my life," she said.

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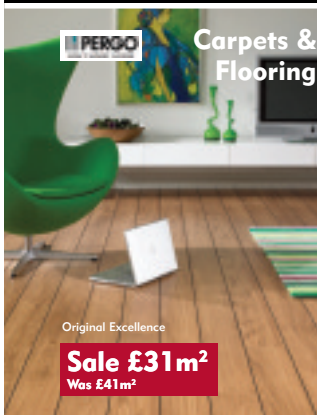
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## Weekly bin service could return

Weekly bin collections should be brought back to homes across the country, the Government have said, as it offered councils a share of £250 million to end fortnightly rounds.

Communities and Local Government Secretary Eric Pickles said he believed every household had "a basic right" to have rubbish collected every week. All four Black Country councils already carry out weekly collections, though Dudley only collects three black bags from each home.

Thousands of families in Wyre Forest and South Staffordshire may be affected.

The plans could spell the end of con-

troversial fortnightly collections for people in Kinver and other areas.

Mr Pickles said: "Weekly rubbish collections are the most visible of all frontline services and I believe every household in England has a basic right to have their rubbish collected every week."

The £250m Weekly Collections Support Scheme is expected to begin in April. Funding will be given to authorities that guarantee they will retain or reinstate weekly waste collections for at least five years.

They must also pledge to boost recycling and tackle fly-tipping and litter.

Dudley Council sparked anger last

September when it announced that households would be limited to just three black bags a week. Bin bags full of rubbish were left uncollected in the streets and the council received more than 1,000 calls about bin collections in the space of a week when the restriction was introduced.

South Staffordshire Councillor Joan Williams said: "I think it's too early to speculate but I'll be intrigued to see in detail exactly what these new proposals are."

Wyre Forest District councillor John Campion said: "The initial reaction is that our existing scheme is now established and successful."

## Visitors flock to car event

Record numbers of car enthusiasts flocked to an annual event showcasing vintage vehicles at a beauty spot in Sedgley.

Baggeridge Country Park hosted its third October fair for vintage vehicle fans at the weekend.

And bosses said that while the event normally attracts 30 exhibitors, there were around 60 this year.

Among the models on show at the event on Sunday were a Ford Capri and Mustang, Triumph TR7, Lotus Cortina and several Morris Minors.

And 1,500 people came to cast their eye over the cars, which organisers said was by far the best turnout since the October rally was introduced in 2009.

Organiser, father-of-three Dave Daley, aged 40, who runs the on-site tea shop with wife Julie, said the day had been a roaring success.

"The weather has not been kind to us the last two years but, while it wasn't glorious sunshine it was warm and dry."



Mark Brooks, aged 44, left, from Lower Gornal with his 1968 blue Ford Mustang and event organiser Dave Daley, 40, from Swindon peers out from under the bonnet



Right: Phil Young, aged 55, from Stourbridge, at the back with his 1966 Sunbeam Alpine and Geoff Brookes, 57, also from Stourbridge, with his 1973 MG Midget

## Residents to receive survey form

More than 9,000 residents in Dudley will be asked to take part in a housing survey this month.

The results of the survey will be used to help Dudley Council develop its response to housing requirements and in setting out its housing planning policies. It will also support the council in making bids for money to build new homes.

The council has appointed researchers David Couttie Associates to carry out and analyse the research on its behalf. The company will be sending out more than 9,000 surveys to a random selection of households in all wards across the borough and to all tenures including private and social housing.

Residents will start to receive surveys from October 7. People are asked to complete and return the forms by October 26.

The survey will ask people to comment on topics such as whether their current accommodation is adequate and what they think their future housing requirements will be.

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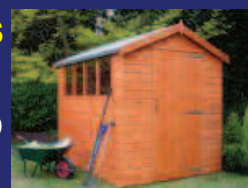


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thechronicle
COMPETITION

# Yes you can have your cake and eat it

ORGANISERS of the Cake International and Crafts for Christmas shows have teamed up to offer 80 Chronicle readers a chance to win a pair of tickets for one of the events.

The largest sugarcraft and cake decoration event ever staged is due to take place at Birmingham's NEC from November 4-5.

And running at the same time, although starting a day earlier is Crafts for Christmas, Hobbycrafts and Art Materials Live which aims to put some fun and creativity back into your Christmas shopping.

Cake International will provide all the latest ideas, supplies, live competitions, demonstrations and workshops so you can create your own masterpiece.

With more than 100 exhibitors offering cutting-edge cake decorating supplies and products, this show is a must-visit for any cake craft and decorating fan. Pop along to 'A Taste of Sugar', a hands-on workshops designed for sugarcrafting newcomers and juniors.

Visit the authors' area where you can pick up top tips from cake decorator gurus. This year's international guest will be the highly regarded Rosa Viacava de Ortega from Peru, who is a pioneer in modern sugarcraft art.

For more information or to book tickets online visit [www.ichf.co.uk](http://www.ichf.co.uk) or phone the Ticket Hotline on 01425 277988.

At Crafts for Christmas, Hobbycrafts and Art Materials Live you will get three shows in one and be able to shop away from the crowds and queues of the High Street. Here you will find everything you need for a handmade and personalised Christmas for you and your family!

Whether it's a nostalgic toy for the children or a necklace for someone special, Crafts for Christmas offers a huge selection of fine handmade crafts. Hobbycrafts, the UK's largest creative crafts show, will be bigger and better this year with more than 200 exhibitors. At Art Materials Live leading professional artists will be on hand to offer the very latest in art supplies, ideas and innovations.

To buy tickets visit [www.ichf.co.uk](http://www.ichf.co.uk) or call the Ticket Hotline: 01425 277988



**Be creative - with cakes or (below) decorations for your Christmas tree**



**Make something festive for Christmas**




## HOW-TO-ENTER

To stand a chance of winning simply answer the following question:

What is the name of the international guest at Cake International?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name, address and contact number (only one entry per household) to Cake/Crafts Show competition, Chronicle series (editorial), 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: Thursday, October 20.

Please specify choice of show.  
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Over the last three years The Round House on the main Stourbridge Road has continued to increase the ever growing list of treatments available. With nearly 12 years of experience owner Samantha started out by specialising in nails but quickly developed a holistic approach to the business expanding services to include a wide range of beauty treatments: Massages, Facials, Waxing, Manicures, Pedicures, Nail Extensions, Spray Tans (Incredibly Black soon to come!), Glitter Tattoos and many more.

Working alongside Samantha, The Round House is very proud to have Louise from Aesthetics on board. Coming from a midwifery background and having over eight years experience in the field Louise travels the country to provide excellent aesthetic procedures including Botox, Teeth Whitening, Restylane Dermal Filler, Lip Enhancement, Facial Resurfacing and much more. All of Louise's services come with a free personal consultation!

The first thing you notice on visiting this establishment is the warm welcome that greets all customers. The relaxing environment takes away the hustle and bustle of the 24/7 world we now occupy leaving customers chilled and pampered, a rarity in this day and age. The recent external refurbishment is the start of a new journey for Samantha and her team with future plans to renovate the interior of the salon to introduce hair treatments too!

Sam has managed to create a versatile Beauty salon that covers all aspects of life, with an expanding team including caterers and photographers The Round House can offer a variety of parties from pamper to prom and even weddings and birthdays!

Prices are designed to be competitive but without any loss in standard, Sam accepts that she may sometimes be beaten on price, that's a fact of life, but maintains she will not be beaten on quality. To book your beauty treatment call Sam today on 0121 550 8279.



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## Downton Abbey

Pick of the week

★ PRICE FROM **£119.95**

EXPERIENCE the grandeur of Highclere Castle, near Newbury where the major drama series Downton Abbey was filmed, portraying the lives of the Crawley family and their servants in Edwardian England on this short break next summer.

The first series cost an estimated £1 million an hour to film, making Downton Abbey the most expensive British TV show ever produced. It is also the most successful British period drama since Brideshead Revisited, with UK ratings exceeding 11 million viewers.

The castle's history includes a fascinating connection with ancient Egypt, as the 5th Earl, with Howard Carter, discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings in 1922. The castle now houses an exhibition that commemorates this historic event, including some rare antiquities from the 5th Earl's earlier Egyptian excavations.

Price includes: return coach travel, overnight half-board accommodation, admission to Highclere Castle including the staterooms, grounds, gardens and the Egyptian Exhibition, a visit to Oxford and the services of a coach driver/tour representative.

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thechronicle

## MP demands scrapyards be regulated

THE scrap metal trade must be regulated – with an end to cash-in-hand payments, Dudley North MP Ian Austin has demanded.

He said the practice fuels metal thefts and he has written to the Government calling for action. It has become a major issue in recent months due to the soaring price of scrap metal.

Thefts have soared in Dudley in recent times with West Midlands Police revealing that 200 drain covers have been stolen in the borough over three

weeks – including more than 70 in seven days alone.

There is a national campaign to change the law so payments for scrap metal can only be paid into a bank account rather than cash in hand.

Mr Austin said: "Metal theft has become a quiet menace. It is causing great disruption and costing home owners, local authorities and businesses hundreds and thousands of pounds per year."

"At a time when council budgets are

squeezed this is adding an unwanted additional strain.

"I have written to Government Minister Eric Pickles to ask what he is doing to help tackle the problem."

He added: "Most importantly, we need to see cash payments for scrap metal made illegal."

Conservative Chris Kelly, MP for Dudley South had talks earlier this year with crime prevention minister James Brokenshire on the problem.

## Bidders box clever at charity auction

CHILDREN in Peru will have new kindergarten facilities thanks to a big hit Dudley auction raising more than £1,500.

The event, organised by cleaning firm ServiceMaster, lived up to its billing with boxing gloves signed by 'Smokin' Joe Frazier and Joe Calzaghe proving the star attraction as the company raised money for former Kinner schoolteacher Margaret Sanderson, now working in the shanty towns of Lima, as part of joint 30th anniversary celebrations.

Excitement mounted on Friday when a written bid for the gloves arrived in the morning post just as the auction was getting started under the hammer of Pedmore-based church minister Peter Jenkins.

### Tremendous

Frantic behind the scenes checks were made to authenticate the bid from boxing fan Melvyn Harper, of Cosely, who was delighted to receive a call later that his £120 bid had won.

ServiceMaster director Hugh Shepherd-Walwyn said: "It all added to a tremendous day; we couldn't have asked for anything better as even the weather was in our favour."

"The gloves were donated by one of our customers who'd paid a lot more for them at another charity event."

"But he obviously isn't a big boxing fan as initially he couldn't even remember who they were signed by."



Margaret Sanderson with youngster Margarita in Peru

"It's great they've gone to an appreciative home and even better to think that young lives from the other side of the world will be impacted by everyone's efforts."

Exactly £1,000 in bids was taken on the day, but at least half as much again is being added through donations in time for the actual anniversary next month.

Miss Sanderson, aged 60, said: "It's absolutely wonderful. I really appreciate all the effort that has gone into this fundraising. It's exciting to think that the company's 30-year

anniversary coincides with my 30th anniversary in Peru.

"The money will be very useful as there's a bit more building work needed on our kindergarten to complete the project."

"We have three classrooms and 50 children between the ages of two and five, so this new funding will enable us to complete the project and benefit many poor children."

Donations are still welcome by contacting ServiceMaster on 01384 457243 or email [dudley@servicemasterclean.co.uk](mailto:dudley@servicemasterclean.co.uk)

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TV star Alison Hammond with her niece, Jasmine Page, and friends, bottom left, Fran Williams and Sasha Priest, both aged 13, at Zion Christian Centre

## Fundraiser is icing on Jasmine's cake

Brave teenager Jasmine Page beamed with pride after friends and family, including her celebrity auntie, held a fundraising day in Halesowen.

Television personality Alison Hammond was master of ceremonies and head judge for a cake baking contest held at the Zion Christian Centre, in Little Cornbow.

Jasmine and her friends also performed a dance routine, while raffles and prizes all helped bring in cash.

The 13-year-old suffered a heart attack while at

Windsor High School in January. But after undergoing a heart transplant at Birmingham Children's Hospital, she is now back at school full-time.

Money raised will be donated to the hospital for a new £35,000 life support machine, the same type that kept Jasmine alive.

The schoolgirl's friends Fran Williams and Sasha Priest, both aged 13, scooped first and second prize in the teenage category of the cake making competition.

TV presenter Alison said it was "a really great day".

## Epileptic cyclist drowned in canal

A keen cyclist drowned after falling off his bike and into a Staffordshire canal after suffering a suspected epileptic fit, an inquest heard.

Lee Jones, aged 44, of Hill Street, Brierley Hill, was found floating in the Stourbridge Canal near Prestwood Lane, Stourton, South Staffordshire, five days after he was reported missing in May. Cannock Coroner's Court heard that Mr Jones had been diagnosed with epilepsy around 20 years ago, suffering from fits which made him go into a "trance" for up to five minutes.

Assistant deputy coroner Louise McCabe recorded a verdict of death by accident.

"We may never know the exact details of what happened to cause Mr Jones to fall in the canal," she said.

"There was some accident which befell him, which

caused him to fall in the canal, where he drowned.

"It is known that he had suffered fits while cycling before."

Mr Jones had been in a "good mood" when he visited his mother on the morning of May 19, the hearing was told, and had planned to cycle along the canal to Stourbridge to sign on as he had recently been made redundant from his job as a forklift truck driver.

### Meeting

He had then planned to see his niece and nephew before meeting a friend - but he never made it.

His black mountain bike was found in the canal later that day by cyclists but his body was not discovered until May 24, when a jogger saw a shape in the canal.

In a statement, Mr Jones's father Trevor, 66, of Underhill Lane, Wolverhampton, said his son had been a "quiet young man".

He said his son did not take his medication for epilepsy as it made him ill.

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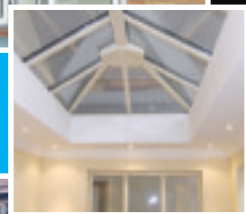
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# Pub reopening is put on hold

The reopening of a Quarry Bank pub has been put back indefinitely as designs for refurbishment of the site have yet to be completed.

The Thorns Pub was expected to open its doors in July or August but this was delayed for the site to undergo a revamp earlier this month.

But no work has yet been carried out at the building in Thorns Road, and Marston's Brewery have said plans were

still in the design stages, although it is "totally committed" to reopening the site.

Marston's chiefs admit it is not now known when the refurbishment will begin or when the pub will be open again to customers. The site is famed for its carvery and a rock star mural on an outside wall.

However no timescale for any work has yet been finalised.

Previously the brewery said the refurbishment scheme had taken slightly longer than planned to draw up.

And talks over changes to the building are still ongoing at the moment leading to the delay in reopening the once-popular site.

Among the works expected to take place include the creation of an outside dining area along with improvements to the inside of the building. The pub's carvery will also return once the pub opens.

A spokesman for Marston's said work was expected to begin in September at the site but the scheme was still going through the planning stages at the moment.

## Empty

"Until everything has been agreed a timescale for the scheme will not be finalised. Also a date for the reopening cannot be set.

"The scheme will still go ahead and the pub will still reopen.

"At the moment it still needs to be confirmed when all this will happen."

The pub has stood empty since January after the brewery reclaimed it from previous licensee Paul Skitt, who had run the site since 2002.

It shut its doors due to declining trade and spiralling costs which Mr Skitt said had made it impossible to continue.

Before its closure, The Thorns was one of the area's best-known pubs.

## Search for young stars



Beth Dunn, front, with front from left, Chloe Davies, Jessica McPhee, Lydia Howard, Florence Webb and Isobel Parsons

The search for the next singing star is on with the launch of a new Midlands singing group. Microphones are being prepared and song sheets printed for the Got 2 Sing group organised by professional singer Beth Dunn.

It already has around 80 adult members but Beth now wants to build on that success by starting a junior section. Classes will take place each Thursday from 5.30pm at St Mary's Church, in Rectory Road, Oldswinford, Stourbridge. Junior sessions from 10 to 17 years-old will be held from 5.30pm until 7pm with over 18s starting at 7.30pm through to 9pm. Styles range from pop to musical theatre and there is even the chance to learn some choreography.

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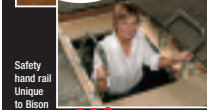
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# eco<sub>2</sub>solar

**[www.eco2solar.co.uk](http://www.eco2solar.co.uk)**

Whilst everyone would like to be more environmentally friendly, there's no question that everyone would love to save money. With spiralling energy costs, alternative sources for heating and electricity are high on the agenda for homeowners.

Help is at hand in the form of Worcestershire - based solar energy specialists Eco2Solar Limited. This family-run firm can advise on and install solar panels which can produce either heating and hot water (solar thermal) or electricity (photovoltaic energy or PV). Unlike some other forms of eco-energy, fitting solar panels requires minimum disruption to your home and using a trusted local company like Eco2Solar also offers peace of mind. Managing Director Paul Hutchens explains, "Eco2Solar is a family business. We employ all of our own surveyors



and installers, meaning you should always get the same level of personal but professional service". This professional service, combined with the high levels of customer care isn't all that's on offer with Eco2Solar's solar panels. Thanks to the Government's Feed-In Tariffs (or FITS) scheme, which pays homeowners for electricity they produce or for electricity which they export back to the national grid, people using solar panels can actually make money back from them. Now is the perfect time to get involved with solar energy, as Paul explains: "Solar energy, especially solar PV, provides a return on your investment which is difficult to beat – up to 15% for a well installed system, guaranteed for 25 years and linked to inflation."

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## Sentimental journey for Chalet Girl



Ed Westwick and Felicity Jones starring in *Chalet Girl*

AN ORDINARY girl is propelled into the world of the super-rich when she gets a job as a chalet maid at an Austrian ski resort in Phil Trail's enjoyable, if predictable, rom-com new DVD release, *Chalet Girl* (12).

Birmingham-born actress Felicity Jones shines in the role of Kim, a former skateboarding prodigy who is trying to cope with the death of her mother in a car accident while juggling a boring fast-food job with looking after her slovenly dad, a reliable comic turn by Bill Bailey.

When she gets the job abroad she finds herself in the world of folk who drink fine wines that cost the equivalent to her month's wage and take a helicopter to the slopes.

### Tricky

Discovering a talent for snowboarding on her day off, she is coached by a Finnish snow dude and sets her sights on winning a big money snowboarding prize to solve her dad's financial problems.

Meanwhile, things get tricky when the heir of the rich family she works for (a debonair Ed Westwick, from cult TV show *Gossip Girl*) begins to take an interest in her, to the annoyance of his mother and fiancée.

Snappy dialogue, lovely snowy scenery and a great pop soundtrack featuring Eliza Doolittle and Paloma Faith, make this a pleasant way to spend 90 minutes.

Worth watching if you enjoyed *Angus Thongs and Perfect Snogging* and *Love Actually*. **LB**

# Stars of stage and screen set to shine in classic tales

TWO critically-acclaimed plays that were among the hottest tickets in London earlier this year are coming to Birmingham next week.

Ubiquitous James Corden, best known for playing Smithy in Gavin & Stacey and for his Comic Relief sketch giving the England football team a pep talk, will star in **One Man, Two Guvnors** at the New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, October 18 to 22.

The show marked Corden's return to the National Theatre, where he first found success as Timms in Alan Bennett's *The History Boys*, reprising the role on Broadway and in the film version.

One Man, Two Guvnors by Richard Bean and directed by Nicholas Hytner is based on 18th century Italian comic play *Servant of Two Masters* but the action has been moved to gangland Brighton in 1963.

### Award

It was a big draw on London's South Bank in the summer, broadcast live in cinemas and is on a short UK tour before heading to London's West End.

Former Coronation Street and *Joking Apart* actress Tracie Bennett was nominated for a 2011 Laurence Olivier Award as best actress for her role as music legend Judy Garland in **End Of The Rainbow** at London's Trafalgar Studios, after it originated at Northampton's Royal Theatre. It is being staged at Birmingham Hippodrome from Monday to Saturday, October 17 to 22.

Miss Bennett's association with Garland started a decade ago, shortly after she played Sharon Gaskell in *Coronation Street*, when she won *Celebrity Stars in Their Eyes* as the child star turned flawed superstar. She is also an accomplished stage performer, having played the grotesque Madame Then-



James Corden in the comedy *One Man, Two Guvnors*

ardier in *Les Misérables* and *Velma Von Tulse in Hairspray*, both in the West End.

Peter Quilter's play with music is an on and behind stage look at Garland's final months in 1968 attempting a comeback with an exhausting programme of concerts at London's Talk of the Town. The Lancashire actress's transformation into Garland has won standing ovations at the hit revival.

When he is not appearing on TV with comedy partner Matt Lucas or swimming the length of the River Thames, David Walliams is a popular children's novelist and a musical version of his hit book **Mr Stink** will be brought to the stage in all its smelliness at Wolverhampton Grand from Wednesday to Sunday, October 19 to 23.

Billed as the first show that pongs, audience members will be given a scratch and sniff book to follow the story about a girl who hides a friendly tramp in a garden shed, under the nose of her mother.

Opera can be heard at the Grand this

week when the Ukrainian National Opera of Kharkiv present Puccini's **Madama Butterfly** on Monday and Verdi's **La Traviata** on Tuesday. The final performances of South Staffs Musical Theatre Company's production of Broadway classic **Guys and Dolls** will be staged nightly at the Lichfield Street theatre with the final chance to catch it on Saturday.

### Glittering

Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre hosts no fewer than four productions over the next week.

A rollercoaster ride through the dark side of Blackpool's glittering lights is promised in **About Face Theatre's Postcards from Blackpool** tonight (Thursday). About Face is one of just a handful of professional theatre companies to employ actors with learning difficulties.

The presence of a German war veteran at a British regimental celebration is a source of conflict in *Opus*



Tracie Bennett conjures the final days of Judy Garland in *End of the Rainbow*

Theatre's **Confessions of Honour** tomorrow evening (Friday), it was written by and features Rugeley actor Gerry Hinks and is set at Staffordshire's Whittington Barracks. Define presents

**Henceforward**, a dark sci-fi farce from Alan Ayckbourn about a composer with a malfunctioning android housekeeper, on Saturday night, and a Shropshire town's key role in the revival of the Olympics is explored by masked theatre group **Vamos in Much Ado About** **Wenlock** on Tuesday evening and with matinees on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Penny Dreadful's **Etherdrome**, a macabre comic look at the early days of science as a 19th century American carnival sideshow, is at the Arena next Thursday (October 20).

ZooNation's twist on a classic movie cross-dressing comedy, **Some Like It Hip Hop**, ends its run at Birmingham Hippodrome on Saturday, the same day that feel-good comedy musical **Legally Blonde** ends its stint at the New Alex.

There's a chance to catch up with the new generation of actors when Birmingham School of Acting presents Oscar Wilde's **A Woman of No Importance** at the city's Crescent Theatre and Keith Waterhouse's **Billy Liar** in its studio, both until Saturday. Wilde's **The Importance of Being Earnest** is staged by Birmingham Rep at The Old Rep on Station Street until October 22.

Comedy highlights include Ricky Gervais and Karl Pilkington's Bristolian chum **Stephen Merchant** at Birmingham Symphony Hall on Monday and Tuesday, and he's back in the West Midlands to play Wolverhampton Civic Hall on November 5. Rising comedy star **Andrew Lawrence**, who had his own Radio 4 series, is at Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms tonight (Thursday). **Lee Nelson** should be Well Good at Wolverhampton Civic on Wednesday, October 19, which is the same night that **Justin Moorhouse** from Phoenix Nights is at Birmingham Town Hall.



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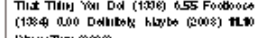


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### FRY'S PLANET WORD

BBC2, 9pm

Stephen Fry knows pretty much every word in the English language, and isn't afraid to show it. He's our favourite boffin, who can't resist a pun, and he's clearly having a ball presenting this show. A job he could have been born to do, exploring the written word as he continues to uncover the origins of human communication. Nothing is more graceful than a pun, making it possible to pass messages across space and time. Without writing we would have no history records, and very little technology. Stephen discovers the earliest known form of writing.

**9.00 Formula 1: The Korean Grand Prix** - Live. The 10th round of the season from the Korean International Circuit (Starttime 7.00am). **9.45 The Andrew Marr Show**. **10.15 Sunday Morning Live**. **10.45 The Politics Show**. **11.00 Weather for the Week Ahead**. **11.30 A Question of Sport** (R). **12.10 Match of the Day Live**. Birmingham City v Leicester City (Kick-off 10.00pm). **1.00 Formula 1: The Korean Grand Prix** (R). **1.00 Lifetime**. **1.00 Points of View**. **1.15 Songs of Praise**.

**9.00 BBC News Regional News** (R).

**9.15 Comedy** (R). Matt Baker and Ellie Harrison visit the Lincolnshire Fens.

**10.15 Saturday Come Dine With Me**. The result is announced, and stars from new film Footloose perform.

**10.00 Audience Reaction**. From Never Gave It Up.

**10.00 Sports**. Harry Hill and Chris de Burca review the day's Premier League action.

**10.00 BBC News Regional News** (R).

**10.15 News at 10** (R). **10.15 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War** (R). **10.15 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War** (R). **10.15 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War** (R).

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## Friday

[illegible]

**CBBC2** 6.00 CBBCedG Zoo CBBC 6.30  
 CBBCedG 11.55 The Pink Panther  
 Show (R) 12.00 CBBCedG 12.30  
 George Alagiah 1.00 Diagnostic Model (R) 1.15  
 Royal United Down Under (R) 2.15/Wicked Link  
 2.30/Windmill Down Under (R) 3.15 Escape to the  
 Country (R) 3.30 Flog It (R) 5.15 Antiques Road  
 Show (R) 5.30  
 Dinning - It Takes Two 7.00 The Culture Show  
 8.30 Gardeners' World 9.30 Antiques Road  
 Show 9.55 Antiques Road Show 10.00 G. 10.30  
 Antiques Road Show 10.55  
 Antiques Road Show 11.55 Late with Josie Holland 12.55  
 Hart Mido (1897) Rock It roll drama with Ian  
 Hart 2.30 The Culture Show 3.30 Close.

[illegible]

**TV Morning News**

**Channel 4** 6.05 *51st Anni* (R) 6.30 *The Hoobs* (R) 6.45 *51st Anni* (R)  
(R) 7.00 *Reality Squared* (R) 7.25 *Reality Love*  
Raymond (R) 7.50 *Everybody Loves Raymond*  
(R) 8.15 *51st Anni* (R) 8.45 *51st Anni* (R)  
8.55 *How to Look Good Naked* (R) 10.00 *Phil Spector: Secret Agent* (R) 12.00 *Channel 4 Movie Summary* (R) 12.45 *The Pied Piper* (R) 1.05  
*51st Anni* (R) 1.30 *51st Anni* (R) 1.55 *51st Anni* (R)  
(1955) *Western Adventure*, directed by and starring  
Ray Milland 2.05 *Channel 4 Presents - Leo  
Percival: The Colour Gorki* (R) 3.30 *Countdown*  
(R) 4.00 *Channel 4 News* (R) 4.15 *Phil Spector*  
(R) 5.00 *Celebrity Come Dine with Me: Return of  
the World* (R) 6.00 *The Simpsons* (R) 6.30 *Hollyoaks*  
(R) 6.45 *Channel 4 News* 7.30 *Unreported World* 7.55  
*Channel 4 News* 8.00 *Channel 4 News* 8.15  
Brown: The Acapachis 10.00 *Pete Wentz Live*  
10.55 *Out of 10* 11.00 *The Tonight Show* 11.30  
*Channel 4 News* 11.45 *Channel 4 News* 12.00  
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*Channel 4 News* 7.55 *Channel 4*

**Channel 5** 6.00 Mitchell 0.15 The Night Shift 0.15 LIVE With  
Gaby 12.05 S Newc Lunchtime 12.15 Eki  
Brody 12.30 S Home and Away 1.05 Highland  
Raid 1.15C Maitland 1.30C The Bill 1.35C  
(2002) 5.00 S Newc at 5.30N Mainframe (FR)  
6.00 Home and Away 6.25 Citi TV 7.00 S  
Newc at 7.25N First Gear; S Newc Update 8.00 Ice  
Road Truckers; Deadliest Show; S Newc at 8.00E  
Eki Brother: Live Edition 9.00 The Bachelor  
10.00 Eki Brother: The Evidence Interview 11.00 Eki  
Brother: Bk on the Side 12.15 SuperCops 0.05  
Chopper Mundy 0.10 The Good 0.15  
Animal Rescue Squad (FR) 5.00 House Builders (FR)  
5.50 House Doctor (FR)

**References**



THREE MUSKETEERS 3D - (12A) - FLS		FOOTLOOSE - (12A) FLS	
Friday, Monday to Thursday	1230 1800 2040	Friday, Monday to Thursday	1730 2030
Saturday and Sunday	1240 1520 1800 2040	Saturday and Sunday	1510 1750 2030
REAL STEEL - (12A) - FLS		JOHNNY ENGLISH - (PG) - FLS	
Friday, Monday to Thursday	1110 1410	Friday, Monday to Thursday	1550 1820 2050
Saturday and Sunday	1710 1410 1710 2010	Saturday and Sunday	1540 1820 2050
THE LION KING 3D - (U) - FLS		KIDS CLUB SATURDAY AND SUNDAY	
Friday, Monday to Thursday	1550	MR POPPERS PERGUINUS - (PG)	1040
Saturday and Sunday	1120 1315	SMURF - (U)	1105

**FLS - FREE LIST SUSPENDED (NO COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS)**  
**PROGRAMME SUBJECT TO CHANGE**  
**REAL MONDAY & WEDNESDAY - £3.10, 3D FILMS £4.20**

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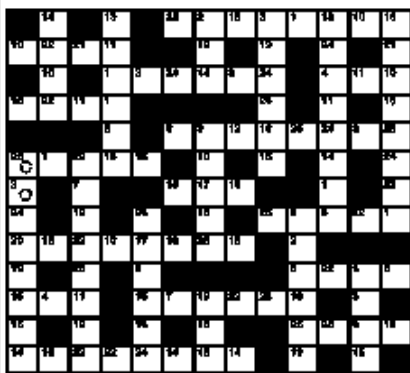


## Brain Gym

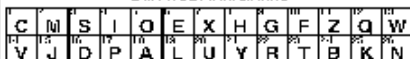
No.138

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



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## Double Crossword

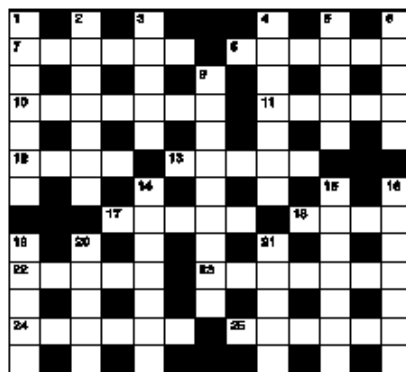
Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

## Cryptic Clues:

- Across**
- One from a dozen players (6)
  - Ships turn back these are waiting for the wind (6)
  - Prevented from making a full report (7)
  - It's a toss up at the Highland Games (5)
  - Willingly have a new life (4)
  - A rotten thing to find (5)
  - They burn faster (5)
  - Footballer's doctor nothing (4)
  - It's about of your finances (5)
  - Shaken and re-mould the seats (7)
  - Pig can't fly, but one pig might (6)
  - It seems it will take a great time to get accepted in a place (6)
- Down**
- All bent on making a game of it (3, 4)
  - Loose dentures for nothing (3, 4)
  - Rings the changes (5)
  - The place is in a mess - that's extraordinary! (7)
  - Seat of petze bird (5)
  - A very exciting business (5)
  - The fallowes stand here assembled (5)
  - Fancy world (7)
  - Receives support from a thin boy (5, 2)
  - Some horses are ranged to drop in the comb (7)
  - Outrages counties (5)
  - Push your way in and snatch up a note (5)
  - Occupation only given to subord makes (5)

## Quick Clues:

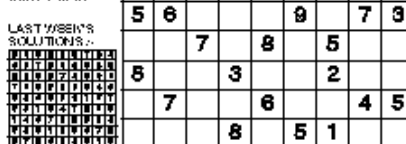
- Across**
- Of a horse (6)
  - Trouble (6)
  - Offices (7)
  - Sham (5)
  - Only (4)
  - Search (5)
  - Conduct (5)
  - Scott (4)
  - Flags (5)
  - Novelty (7)
  - Offer (6)
  - Swiss (6)
- Down**
- Ask for (7)
  - Craft (7)
  - Tell tale (5)
  - Admit (7)
  - Whereas (5)
  - Short (5)
  - Superluous (5)
  - Fall out (7)
  - Fault (7)
  - Gift (7)
  - World (5)
  - Tornout (5)
  - Creativity (5)



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 1. Horse, 4. Conduct, 8. Alleviate, 9. Chain, 10. Swiss, 11. Adventure, 12. Tell, 14. Line, 16. Mountain, 17. Fault, 20. View, 21. Cottage, 22. Swiss, 23. Swiss, 24. Swiss, 25. Swiss. Down: 1. Horse, 2. Swiss, 3. Swiss, 4. Chain, 5. Swiss, 6. Swiss, 7. Swiss, 8. Swiss, 9. Swiss, 10. Swiss, 11. Swiss, 12. Swiss, 13. Swiss, 14. Swiss, 15. Swiss, 16. Swiss, 17. Swiss, 18. Swiss, 19. Swiss, 20. Swiss, 21. Swiss, 22. Swiss, 23. Swiss, 24. Swiss, 25. Swiss.

## Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.



## Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:  
The three words are: HAY, RICE, and NUT. The letter represented by the question mark is: A.

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## Chief visits major regeneration project

THE Chairman of the country's best known housebuilder, the Barratt Group recently visited Waters Edge in Stourport on Severn – a major waterside regeneration project by the company's West Midlands division.

Bob Lawson, is in fact the second VIP to visit the scheme on Mart Lane recently, after Wyre Forrest MP Mark Garnier also gave it his seal of approval last month.

A total of 146 homes are currently under construction at Waters Edge and the project is helping to breathe new life into the town's canal basin.

The development also has 18 boat moorings which are available to purchasers of the new homes.

During his visit Mr Lawson was shown around the canal basins that have recently been restored, some of the brand new properties that have been constructed and he had the chance to speak to some residents at Waters Edge.

Mr Lawson, said, "Waters Edge represents the full panoply of Barratt's expertise. Outstanding historic buildings have been completely renovated and given a new life and new uses."

"Sympathetic new construction has been undertaken to create new homes for individuals and families in an outstanding environment which blends the rich history with modern living requirements."



Above: Barratt Group chairman Bob Lawson and Adrian Farr Field, managing director for Barratt West Midlands, on a boat in Waters Edge canal basin, Stourport on Severn

Left: Bob Lawson and Graydon Worthing view the development from a bridge



Barratt Group chairman Bob Lawson is discussing the Waters Edge development with sales adviser Heather Hanks and Barratt's sales director Graydon Worthing

"I was very proud to see the result and I am confident that Waters Edge will give the residents and the people of Stourport much pleasure in the years ahead."

Graydon Worthing, Sales Director for Barratt West Midlands added, "It was a pleasure to have Mr Lawson visit Waters Edge. This

development is a flagship scheme for us, having been designed around the beautiful and historic basin.

"We have had a lot of interest from the local community and also from people outside the area keen to invest or make a new home in the popular town of Stourport. First time buyers

and people looking to downsize are particularly interested in this development."

Barratt West Midlands is currently offering a selection of two-bedroom apartments at Waters Edge priced from £159,950 and three-bedroom houses priced from £170,000. For more information, please contact the sales

office on 01299 828 130 open daily from 10am to 5pm.

Alternatively, please call the sales hotline on 0844 811 9933 open seven days a week from 8am to 9pm or log on to [www.barratthomes.co.uk/waters-edge](http://www.barratthomes.co.uk/waters-edge)

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# DIXONS

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## St. Margarets Drive, Halesowen



£170,000

A traditional three bed semi detached house, porch, hallway, lounge/diner, kitchen, utility, 1st floor bathroom, garage, garden and outbuildings to rear, central heating.

## Highfield Road, Halesowen



£110,000

Three bedroom semi detached property comprising lounge, kitchen, shower room, front and rear gardens, garage, central heating and double glazing

## Dale Road, Halesowen



Offers Over £200,000

A three bedroom semi detached property comprising dining room, lounge, kitchen, utility, garage/store, driveway, rear garden and double glazing and central heating

## Norwood Avenue, Cradley Heath



Offers Over £75,000

Two bedroom semi detached property comprising lounge/diner, kitchen, first floor bathroom, double glazing and no upward chain.

## Howley Grange Road, Halesowen



£240,000 **NEW INSTRUCTION**

A three bedroom semi detached house comprising lounge, conservatory, dining room, kitchen, utility, bathroom, garage, driveway, rear garden, central heating and double glazing.

## Romsley Close, Halesowen



£160,000

**NEW**

A three bedroom semi detached comprising kitchen, lounge/diner, bathroom, garage, driveway, rear garden, central heating + double glazing.

## Ross Heights, Rowley Regis



£125,000

**NEW INSTRUCTION**

Three bedroom semi detached property in need of updating, two reception rooms, kitchen, bathroom, garage, driveway + rear garden. No upward chain.

## Albrighton Road, Halesowen



£130,000

**NEW**

Three bedroom semi detached property, kitchen, lounge, 1st floor bathroom, front and rear gardens double glazing and central heating. No upward chain.

## Abberley Close, Halesowen



£170,000

**NEW**

A four/five property, cul-de-sac location, breakfast kitchen, shower room, open plan lounge, bathroom, bedroom, double glazing and central heating

## Frankley Avenue, Halesowen



£210,000

**NEW INSTRUCTION**

A three bedroom traditional semi detached property with lounge, kitchen/diner, utility area, bathroom and separate wc, driveway, garage, front and rear gardens, double glazing and central heating. No upward chain.

## Norwood Avenue, Cradley Heath



£75,000

A two bedroom semi detached property with lounge/diner, kitchen, 1st floor bathroom and double glazing. No upward chain.

## Oak Barn Road, Halesowen



Offers Over £150,000

This semi detached house has lounge/diner, kitchen, conservatory, three bedrooms, bathroom, rear garden and double glazing.

## Olive Hill Road, Halesowen



£150,000

A traditional semi detached comprising of lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, utility room, three bedrooms, family bathroom, rear garden, garage, off road parking.

## Marquis Drive, Halesowen



Offers Over £135,000

Three bedroom semi detached property with kitchen, lounge, first floor shower room, garage, driveway, rear garden, double glazing and central heating

## Winsford Close, Halesowen



£180,000

A three bedroom semi detached property, L-shaped lounge, study, breakfast kitchen, bathroom, garden, timber garage + driveway

## Maple Road, Halesowen



Offers Over £105,000

A two bedroom terraced property comprising lounge, dining room, kitchen, first floor bathroom, rear garden, double glazed and central heated.

## Siviters Lane, Rowley Regis



£125,000

Three bedroom end terrace property, lounge/diner, kitchen, downstairs bathroom, double glazed and centrally heated and rear garden.

## Shelton Lane, Halesowen



£140,000

Three bedroom semi detached property, lounge, open plan kitchen/diner, bathroom, rear garden and driveway, double glazing and central heating (both where specified)

## Westbourne Road, Halesowen



£140,000

A three bedroom semi detached property comprising lounge/diner, conservatory, kitchen, bathroom, double glazing and central heating, rear garden and driveway

## Uplands Avenue, Rowley Regis



Offers Over £100,000

Mid terraced three bedroom property comprising of lounge, dining room, breakfast kitchen, bathroom, rear garden, driveway, central heating and double glazing.

## Middle Tree Road, Halesowen



Offers Over £140,000

Three bedroom semi detached comprising lounge, dining room, extended kitchen, bathroom, driveway, garage, double glazing, central heating and no chain

## Chatsworth Road, Halesowen



Offers Over £150,000

Three bedroom semi detached, lounge/diner, kitchen, first floor bathroom, central heating, double glazing driveway, garage and rear garden, no upward chain.

## Beecher Road, Halesowen



Offers Over £100,000

A traditional two bed terraced house, hallway, lounge, kitchen, utility, bathroom, double glazing and central heating and garden to rear

## Petford Street, Cradley Heath



Offers Over £110,000

Three bedroom property lounge, kitchen/diner, bathroom, rear garden, central heating and double glazing, parking and garage.

## Charter Crescent, Cradley Heath



£80,000

Two bedroom semi detached property comprising kitchen, lounge, first floor bathroom, front and rear gardens, part double glazed and central heating.



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#### OLDBURY, WYVERN CLOSE

Set in a very quiet cul-de-sac is this modern unfurnished detached home, briefly comprising of: Four Bedrooms, Master with En-Suite, Spacious Lounge, Separate Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen with White Goods, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Driveway and Garage Parking, Front Rear Gardens.

**£895 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, HAGLEY ROAD

A unique opportunity to rent a stunning detached house in Halesowen, comprising of: Three Large Double Bedrooms, Three Spacious Reception Rooms with original features, Milton Hallway, Beautiful Kitchen, Modern Bathroom with separate Shower Cabina. A lovely mature Garden with an 8 Man Jacuzzi, Large Driveway for at least 4 Cars, and Detached Double Garage.

**£825 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, SUMMERFIELDS AVENUE

Located in Hurst Green, Halesowen is this beautiful extended semi-detached home and an ideal place for local schools and commutable for Birmingham, briefly comprising of: Four Bedrooms, Two Reception Rooms, Modern Fitted Kitchen, House Bathroom with Shower, Downstairs WC, Gas Central Heating, Part Double Glazed, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway and Garage Parking, Unfurnished.

**£775 PCM**



#### BLAKEDOWN, BIRMINGHAM ROAD

An exquisite property in a superb location and with great transport links, briefly comprising of: Four Bedrooms, Master Bedroom with En-Suite, Fully Fitted Kitchen, Master Bathroom with Shower/Spacious Lounge, Rear Gardens, Garage and Parking.

**£750 PCM**



#### ROWLEY REGIS, ADMIRALS WAY

A very well presented unfurnished detached house, set within a quiet cul-de-sac, comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Separate Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, House Bathroom with Shower, Front & Rear Gardens, Garage & Driveway Parking.

**£675 PCM**



#### TIVIDALE, ASHTREE ROAD

A 3 Bed Linked Detached Property, Benefitting from Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Living Room, Dining Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway and Garage.

**£650 PCM**



#### ROWLEY REGIS, CLEINT HILL DRIVE

A nicely presented modern link detached 3 bedroom house, briefly comprising of: Living Room, Dining Room, Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing and Gas Central Heating, Two Parking Spaces and Rear Garden, Unfurnished.

**£650 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, SANDERSON PLACE

Located in Hayley Green, is this unfurnished first floor apartment, briefly comprising of: Spacious Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Master with En-Suite, Bathroom and Parking Space. Viewing Highly Recommended.

**£650 PCM**



#### ROWLEY REGIS, THRONE ROAD

Located on a commutable road into Birmingham and close to the M5 J2, is this well presented unfurnished semi-detached home, briefly comprising of: Three Bedrooms, Large Through Lounge, Modern Fitted Kitchen, House Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Front and Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking.

**£575 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, BETHESDA GARDENS

Located on this new build estate is this modern ground floor apartment, coming part furnished to suit, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Modern Bathroom with Shower, Master with En-Suite, Fitted Kitchen with White Goods, Open Plan Spacious Lounge, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Allocated Parking, A Most View Property.

**£575 PCM**



#### CRADLEY HEATH, HALESOWEN ROAD

An unfurnished mid terraced house modernised throughout, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Utility Room, Downstairs WC, Three Good Sized Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Courtyard Style Garden, Parking to the Rear of the Property and On Road.

**£675 PCM**



#### DUDLEY, PEARCE CLOSE

Just come on the market is this lovely unfurnished semi detached house, briefly comprising of: Three Bedrooms, Gas Central Heating, Large Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, Conservatory, Front & Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking.

**£550 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, HARDEN MANOR COURT

This light and airy first floor apartment, situated a stones throw away from Halesowen town centre, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Modern Bathroom with Shower, Master with En-Suite, Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedrooms, Large Spacious Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Warm Air Heating, Communal Garden and Plenty of Parking, Unfurnished.

**£550 PCM**



#### ROWLEY REGIS, MINCING LANE

A newly refurbished terraced house, briefly comprising of: Three Bedrooms, New Fitted Kitchen, Utility Room, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Driveway Parking for 2 Cars, Rear Garden, Unfurnished.

**£525 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, LODGEFIELD ROAD

An unfurnished semi detached house, on a popular road, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory, Two Bedrooms, Shower Room, Front & Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking.

**£525 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, BLOOMFIELD STREET NORTH

Located on this popular road, and close to Halesowen town centre and Windsor High School, is this well present mid-terrace property, comprising of: Two Large Bedrooms, Cozy Lounge, Large Kitchen, House Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Low Maintenance Rear Garden, On Road Parking, Available on a Furnished or Unfurnished Basis.

**£525 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, BANNER STREET

This lovely unfurnished terrace house has: Two Double Bedrooms, Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Bathroom with Shower, Low Maintenance Rear Garden.

**£495 PCM**



#### TIPTON, MIDDLE MEADOW

An unfurnished, modern third floor apartment briefly comprising: Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Office Room, Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Allocated Parking Space, Communal Garden.

**£495 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, HAGLEY COURT, HAGLEY ROAD

A beautiful Part furnished ground floor apartment, close to Halesowen town centre, briefly comprising of: Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Spacious Lounge, Communal Garden and Allocated Parking Space.

**£475 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, WETHEREND LANE

An unfurnished ground floor apartment, well presented throughout, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Lounge/Dining Room, Bathroom with Shower, One Bedroom with Built in Wardrobes, On Block Garage.

**£375 PCM**



#### HALESOWEN, PIPPIN AVENUE

Located on the popular Homer Hill Estate in Halesowen is this unfurnished first floor flat, briefly comprising of: Living Room/Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Communal Garden.

**£340 PCM**

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## Crystal clear that these new homes are stylish



A typical Charles Church interior. The company is building at Crystal Mead, in Stourbridge

'Stylish', 'opulent' and 'welcoming' are just three words being used to describe the stunning brand new homes found at luxury home-builder Charles Church's Crystal Mead development in Stourbridge.

Househunters across Stourbridge and the surrounding area are be treated to a desirable portfolio of three and four bedroom traditional homes at Crystal Mead, which all boast impressive façades and inviting interiors.

Alison Reading, sales director for Charles Church South Midlands, comments: "Our homes at Crystal Mead really stand out from the rest, as they have been thoughtfully designed to cater for homeowners' requirements and more, whether that's somewhere with room for a study, a master bedroom with the luxury of an en suite or a home with a sizeable garden."

"In addition, the finish and attention to detail within our properties are exquisite, as the homes are built by the best craftsmen, offering construction excellence. So, I encourage purchasers to pay us a visit at Crystal Mead, which is located off Kirkpatrick Drive, where they can find out how they can become a part of our exclusive community."

Charles Church is renowned for building luxury homes built with precision, but despite this, the properties

remain an affordable option. Prices at the development start from £199,950 or from £159,960 through the Government-led FirstBuy scheme for the attractive three bedroom Farthing houses.

For those looking to move up the property ladder, the company's Part Exchange scheme is being considered for the four bedroom designs. Take for example the magnificent four bedroom detached Millwood house type at Plot 160, which is available through Part Exchange Plus or a £10,000 discount. This traditional two storey spacious property comes complete with carpets throughout and turf to the gardens. The Millwood is priced at £249,950.

Charles Church's Crystal Mead development is situated on Kirkpatrick Drive, off Auckland Road, on the site of the former Wordsley hospital. Many of the old buildings have been retained and sympathetically restored, including the historic clock tower, ensuring the development has a real sense of history. The development boasts a traditional layout, with a beautiful area of open space for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Ideal for commuters, the M5 is within ease of reach of the development and Brierley Hill and Ambleside are close by.

For information on the range of homes available at Crystal Mead, please call the marketing suite on 0844 490 1566 open daily from 11am until 5pm or visit the website at [www.charleschurch.com](http://www.charleschurch.com)

## Your chance to ask our expert team

**Q:** I know I have to prime wood before painting it, but do I also have to use undercoat?

**A:** Yes – the better your preparation is, the better your finish should be and the longer your paintwork should last.

The easiest thing to use is a combined wood primer and undercoat, but if you already have some primer,

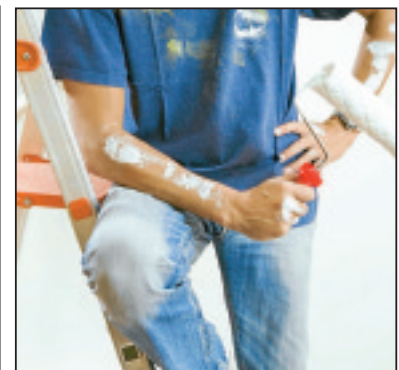
you can buy separate undercoat. Try 1 Hour Undercoat, £8.49 for 750ml, International, which is a really good quick-drying product (touch dry in 30 minutes and overcoatable in around an hour).

It's great if you have a lot of painting to do, or want to get it done fast, and it can be used on all interior woodwork.

## Paintwork doesn't have to be messy



Make sure you get a roller really clean after using it



It's better if you don't let water-based paint dry on fabric

IT'S EASY to get paint where you shouldn't, but it needn't be a disaster. Follow Julia Gray's top cleaning tips.

Water-based paints are much nicer to use than oil-based ones, and also easier to remove.

They generally come off flooring, skin and clothes (don't let the paint dry on fabric) pretty easily with water or water and household cleaner or sugar soap.

It's harder to remove oil-based paints, especially once they're dry, but fresh paint can usually be cleaned off with turpentine substitute (turps) or white spirit. If you have to put either of these on your skin, wash it thoroughly afterwards with soap and water.

Large emulsion rollers are a pain to

clean, so if you've started painting with one and haven't finished, don't waste time cleaning it.

Instead, wrap it in a couple of plastic bags overnight. This will keep the paint moist, so it doesn't dry out, and you can carry on painting where you left off the next day. You can do the same with paintbrushes.

**Soaking**  
If you don't get rollers really clean, the paint will dry on the sleeve and ruin the finish next time you use it.

With emulsion rollers, it's a good idea to soak them in water first and then clean them thoroughly under a running tap, wringing them out constantly to remove the paint until the water runs

clear. For an easy alternative, try the Dulux PaintPod painting system, which cleans the roller for you.

Rollers for oil-based paints (which are made of foam) usually have to be thrown away after use.

Your paintbrushes should also be washed out in water or turps/white spirit, depending on the type of paint used.

If you're doing a lot of DIY, keep your brushes soaking in jam jars or tubs (topped up regularly), as they can become unusable when they dry out.

As long as the bristles aren't squashed out of shape, they should be fine. Using a plastic biscuit tin is a good idea because you can lay the brushes pretty much flat.



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# MOTERING NEWS AND REVIEWS CHRONICLE MOTERING

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Your essential guide to the world of motoring compiled by Motoring Editor Sharon Walters

## Greek with a Latin heart

THE Italian-American connection has brought to Britain, among other things, a popular restaurant chain, pizza and ice-cream in a seemingly endless variety of flavours.

Now the link between Chrysler and Fiat has brought us something new, which both automotive giants hope we'll find just as appealing to our palate.

Chrysler is hoping to reinvent itself in this country with no fewer than seven new models over the next five years, beginning with the Ypsilon and the larger Delta which went on sale this month.

While they carry the Chrysler badge and grille, both are powered by a range of proven, economical engines familiar from the popular Fiat 500 range, and Italian styling to give them a distinct, even head-turning, identity.

Both, in fact, have already enjoyed some success on the other side of the channel with a Lancia badge.

Chrysler has long had a relatively small but significant presence in this country with its legendary Jeep brand and the Voyager MPV, but has never managed to crack the all-important small family car and supermini markets.

Quite simply, it has had little to offer except for the likes of the very American Neon of a few years ago, which sold in small numbers.

Now the company has worked closely with its majority stakeholder, Fiat, to produce two far more relevant offerings, both hatchbacks with the accent on interior space with modern, economical engines including the Fiat 500's Twin Air, voted International Engine of the Year.

The small of the two (a Fiesta/Corsa rival) is the Ypsilon (pronounced Epsilon as in the Greek letter E), a compact but curvy hatch with prices from £10,695.

### Magic

Engine choices are the latest version of the familiar 1.2-litre 'Fire' petrol, the 1.3 diesel multijet and the 900cc Twin Air.

The diesel averages over 74mpg, the Twin Air over 67mpg, and both have CO2 emissions figures below the magic 100g/km mark, so are exempt from road tax.

The 1.2 engine, the cheapest in the line-up, has figures of 57.6mpg and 115g/km. All models have an automatic 'stop/start' system to save fuel in traffic.

I drove the Twin Air, although the first thing which struck me wasn't the engine but the surprising amount of interior space hiding within this compact interior.

Headroom and rear-seat passenger space are particularly generous, even for taller occupants.

And it has a class average 245 litres of boot space with five people on board.

Thanks to 'hidden' rear door

handles, the Ypsilon has a sleek, sporting look while maintaining all the practicality of a four door, which passengers will appreciate.

The interior has a quality feel, too, with comfortable seats and high-grade materials. The instruments are tidily placed in a central binnacle atop the dash, above the

air conditioning and audio controls.

road surfaces which can upset some small, light cars.

It's no surprise it was voted International Engine of the Year, especially with the bonus of a Ferrari-like growl if you test that sprint time for yourself. Do that, though, and you very rapidly hit the rev limiter and lose the fuel economy benefits. The Ypsilon feels solid for a small car, with well weighted steering and confidence-inspiring handling.

Like Fiats, it has a 'city' button which makes the steering lighter for easier handling around town and when parking.

The Ypsilon is a car that can be used in a



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# Kia adds extra touch of luxury to cee'd trim



Kia has included a top-of-the-range '4' trim level to augment the cee'd and cee'd SW ranges

KIA has added a new top-of-the-range '4' version, with increased power output and high level of specification, to its cee'd and cee'd SW line-ups.

Launched this year on the pro. cee'd three-door hatchback, the '4' version is a logical extension of Kia's simple trim-naming structure above the existing '1', '2' and '3' versions.

The cee'd '4' family hatchback and cee'd SW '4' family estate car share the same 1.6-litre CRDi turbodiesel engine that produces 126bhp at 4,000rpm – up from 113bhp on other trim versions – and 188lb/ft torque (255Nm) from 1,900 to 2,750rpm. A six-speed manual transmission is standard and a 4-speed automatic transmission is available as an option on the cee'd SW '4'.

Top speed on both manual variants is 122mph with the 0-60mph dash taking 10.6 seconds in the hatchback and an additional 0.2 seconds in the estate. CO2 emissions for the cee'd '4' are 119 g/km, placing it in VED band 'C', while the combined-cycle fuel consumption figure is an economical 62.8mpg.

A more sporting exterior has been achieved with 17-inch alloy wheels, black bezel headlights and rear window privacy glass. The side indicator repeaters have been inte-

grated into the door mirrors. Inside, full black leather upholstery combined with front heated seats and a leather trimmed steering wheel and gear-knob add a luxurious feel. Cruise control, with steering wheel mounted controls, and electrically-operated heated and folding door mirrors get marks for convenience.

## Obstacles

High-tech features include a seven-inch colour touch screen system which acts as the infotainment hub and controls a fully-integrated colour satellite navigation system, with European mapping, as well as the radio, CD player, iPod connectivity and Bluetooth hands-free systems. A parking camera system offers a colour view of obstacles behind the vehicle and is displayed on the same screen. The cee'd SW version adds audible reverse-parking sensors to this list.

The cee'd '4' and cee'd SW '4' are available to order now and priced at £19,195 and £20,345 respectively on-the. The automatic option on the cee'd SW costs £1,100 whilst the sporty-looking pro. cee'd '4' is £18,995 on-the-road.

As with all new Kia vehicles, a seven-year, 100,000-mile, fully transferable warranty comes as standard.

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Grand Vitara 3 door model shown is the 2.4 SZ4 M/T available at £16,295 on the road (metallic paint available at £415). Grand Vitara 5 door model shown is the 2.4 SZ5 M/T available at £19,495 on the road (metallic paint available at £415). Grand Vitara range official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km): urban from 22.6 (12.5) to 34.9 (8.1), extra urban from 34.9 (8.1) to 47.1 (6.0), combined from 29.1 (9.7) to 41.5 (6.8). Official CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 225g/km to 179g/km.

\*The Grand Vitara 3 door is available with monthly payments of £199. Minimum deposit £7,831 required. The Grand Vitara 5 door is available with monthly payments of £249. Minimum deposit £9,031 required. These offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. \*\*ESP® is a registered trademark of Daimler AG. All prices and specifications are correct at time of going to press. Offer Expires 31/10/11

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# Skoda wins caravan award for second year



The aptly named Superb is worth its own weight when it comes to towing says the Caravan Club

THERE'S nothing quite like holding on to your crown, and Skoda UK is having a fantastic year doing just that.

The brand's latest repeat triumph comes in the 2012 Caravan Club Towcar of the Year Awards, where the Skoda Superb Estate Elegance 2.0-litre TDI DSG took top honours in the £25,000-£32,000 category.

It's a feat the acclaimed family load-lugger also achieved last year.

The judges, made up of experienced motoring journalists and seasoned caravanning experts, were bowled over by the Skoda.

They described it as "the best on hill starts by a mile", "effortless to drive and tow with", "confidence-inspiring" and a "pleasant environment to be in".

Skoda UK Brand Director, Robert Hazelwood, said: "Winning any

honour once is a great achievement but to do it again is testament to the outstanding engineering, and quality of the Skoda range.

"We know the caravanning community is an enthusiastic supporter of the Superb Elegance Estate. Its powerful 2.0-litre diesel engine and efficient DSG transmission create a refined and stable base for stress-free long-distance towing."

## Ability

The 2012 competition attracted 30 entrants from a variety of big-name car manufacturers.

Rigorous testing was conducted, as it is every year, at the Millbrook Proving Ground in Bedfordshire.

This year's special guest was former F1 driver Johnny Herbert, who attended the testing and presented the awards to representatives from the winning manufacturers at a ceremony in central London.

The 30 cars were divided into three price classes and two all-wheel-drive categories (up to 1800kg and over 1800kg).

Manufacturers were invited to submit any models that were new launches in the period August 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011, or existing models that had been substantially modified.

The Skoda Superb Estate was invited back because it was last year's overall Towcar of the Year, as well as the class winner.

As the 2012 result showed, the car easily proved up to the challenge of newer rivals.

During track tests the judges assessed each car's towing ability as well as acceleration, braking and the ability to cope with demanding hill starts.

They also made careful assessments of each entrant's usability in terms of everyday caravanning needs.

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**HONDA ACCORD 1.8 Sport**, 02, blue, alloys, 10 mths MoT, taxed, 70k, family owned, excellent condition, £1,500. 01394 261085.

**JAGUAR S-TYPE**  
Auto, 99(T), metallic mint green, all usual refinements, tax/MoT, £12,500.  
07954 171336 / 01902 675203.

**JAGUAR XJS CELEBRATION**  
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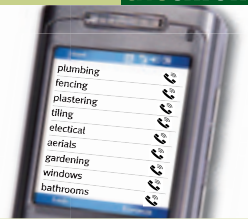




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# sport

## Juniors

### HALAS BOYS LEAGUE HALAS HAWKS EAST 3 PHOENIX YOUTH 3

The U9s conceded an early goal. An equalizer by Jack Plant should have been enough, but Phoenix scored twice more. Jack Plant did score a second.

### BILBROOK EAST 2 HALAS HAWKS WEST 3

The U9s West took an early lead through Harvey Brookes. Bilbrook equalized but George Priest restored the lead from a corner. Bilbrook again equalized but it was a third goal by Brookes which gave Halas a win.

### HASBURY RANGERS 0 HALAS HAWKS EAST 4

The U10s East started brightly and took the lead with a Louie Jones strike followed by a Charlie Greening penalty. The second half saw a goal from Oliver Miller and a second from Charlie Greening.

### GORNAL ATH 2 HALAS HAWKS 0

The U11s West started strongly but could not get a breakthrough. Gornal took the lead and netted a second just before half time. Halas started the second half well and continued to push but again were held out.

### HALAS HAWKS 1 OLD WULFRIANS 5

The U13s game was an even contest for the first 20 minutes but Old Wulfs raced into a three goal lead before half time. Halas got one back through Shane Billingham but Old Wulfs scored two more before the end.

### BLACK COUNTRY COLTS 0

The U14s had a close match against Black Country Colts but the stalemate was broken in the second half when Halas won a free kick which Michael Eaton converted for an equal goal.

### HALAS HAWKS NORTH 2 HALAS HAWKS EAST 2

The U15s East came out on top in the derby against Halas North. Strikes by Reece Marks and Dan Willetts provided the East with a 2-1 victory. Harry Wootton netted a late reply for North.

### HALAS HAWKS 7 KEWFOORD EAGLES 1

Halas U17s lead at the end of the first half. The lads moved through the gears in the second half and finally got the breakthrough and settled down to win 7-1.

### GIRLS LEAGUE HALAS HAWKS 1 KINVER COLTS 0

Halas U13s continued improving and created many chances against Kinver. Although they only converted one, a first half strike from Amy Plimmer, Halas always looked in control.

### HALAS HAWKS 2 BUSTLEHOMME 4

Despite their eventual 4-2 defeat, the U14 girls spent most of the second half camped in Bustlehome's goal area. Amy Blakemore scored twice for Halas.

### NETHERTON COLTS 2 HALAS HAWKS 6

Halas U16s took control of the Birmingham County Cup from the whistle and were rewarded with a Kate Drew goal. Netherton pulled level but Halas stepped it up after the break and recorded a hat trick from Drew, plus a brace from Liz McAleenan.

## Seniors make a splash in early-season win

SENIOR swimmers from Halesowen Swimming Club were back in action at the Braunstone Sports Trophy Gala in Leicester on Saturday. The evening of excellent performances saw the club in the top position by 31 points.

Double event winners were Josh Bradley in the individual medley and freestyle, James Benson in the backstroke and freestyle, Jacob Darby in the butterfly and breaststroke, Chloe Robbins in the backstroke and freestyle, and Chloe Finch in the butterfly and freestyle. Other individual first places went to Jack

Simpson and Zach Collins in the backstroke, Ruby Fell, India Hanke, and Connor Oates in the breaststroke, Hannah Cuthbert, Luke Morris and Lauren Hill in the butterfly and Jack Slattery in the freestyle. The relay teams won both the medley and freestyle relays.

**Final scores:** Halesowen 313, Braunstone A 282, Coalville 208, Braunstone B 186, Market Harborough 185, Leicester Neptune 164 and Braunstone C 55.

Swimmers from Halesowen travelled to Worcester for the first round of the National Swimming League on Saturday.

After the first 10 events Halesowen found

themselves struggling in fifth spot and with the 10 events to go the team were six points adrift. In the final round of relay events the swimmers put in some fine performances, but it was not until the final two events did Halesowen finally secure third place.

Individual event winners were Chloe Robbins in the backstroke, Chloe Finch and Brian Steatham in the freestyle, Jack Simpson in the backstroke and Ben Meakin in the butterfly.

**Final scores:** City of Coventry A 261, Stourbridge A 210, Haleshampton 164, City of Hereford 164 and Stratford Sharks 83.



The winners show off their awards at the Black Country Sport and Physical Activity Awards ceremony at Dudley

## Sporting award puts varnish on Jess's success

HALESOWEN cyclist Jess Varnish has been crowned Black Country Sportsman of the Year as she targets a place at next year's Olympics.

The 20-year-old picked up the Elvis Gordon award at the Black Country Sport and Physical Activity Awards ceremony in Dudley.

Varnish, who rides for Halesowen Athletics and Cycling Club, hopes to clinch a place on the British track cycling team for London 2012 and she pipped fellow Olympic hopeful Kristian Thomas, a Wolverhampton-based gymnast, to the top prize.

The awards, which are in their third

year, were hosted by Wolverhampton-born Olympian and cycling commentator Hugh Porter at Dudley's Copthorne Hotel last week.

Simon Hall, Black Country BeActive Partnership director said: "It was a real Olympic-style night of great highs, some very emotional, and once again showed how important the awards and sport are to local people."

More than 200 sportsmen and women, officials and guests gathered at the event as winners were announced in 16 categories.

Veteran boxing coach Bob Dillon collected the Chair's Recognition Award for his long service to Lions Boxing Club

in Brierley Hill while former Worcestershire cricketer Gavin Haynes was named coach of the year.

### Award winners

**Volunteer of the year:** Amy Baker (Willenhall), swimming; runners-up, Jayne Withers (Rowley Regis), swimming, Luke Collins (Dudley), football.

**Physical activity initiative of the year:** Dudley Healthy Towns Multi-sport; runners-up, Sporting FADS Badminton/Zumba (Tipton), Galton Valley Morn and Toddler Family Fitness (Sandwell).

**Sport Unlimited project of the year:** Swimming lessons for children with Down's Syndrome (Walsall); runners-up, Rakegate Dance (Wolverhampton), Q3 Key Stage 2 Athletics (Great Barr).

**Community club of the year:** RSK T&T Rhinos Football Club (Walsall); runners-up, Halesowen Athletic and Cycle Club, Team Sandwell Volleyball Club.

**Community team of the year:** RSK T&T Rhinos Wheelchair Basketball (Wolverhampton); runners-up, Dudley Heathens Speedway, DK Rugby Club.

**Junior team of the year:** Sandwell Girls Athletics; runners-up Dudley College football.

**Young sportsman of the year:** Maddison Moore (Dudley) karate; runners-up, Reuben Charlsworth (Dudley) Kickboxing, Jordan Fellows (Walsall) slalom skiing.

**Young volunteer of the year:** Sam Johnson (Wolverhampton) rugby; runners-up, Chloe Harris (Walsall) football, Harriet Platter (Walsall) football.

**Coach of the year:** Mark Haynes (Dudley) cricket; runners-up, Howard Court (Tipton) athletics, Mohammed Abdullah (Smethwick) boxing.

**Unsung hero:** Diane Davis (Stourton) tennis; runners-up, Richard Turner (Kingswinford) hockey, Geoff Webb (Willenhall) hockey.

**Elvis Gordon sportsman of the year:** Jess Varnish (Halesowen) cycling; runner-up, Kristian Thomas (Wolverhampton) gymnastics.

**Chair's recognition award:** Bob Dillon (Brierley Hill) boxing.

# TROPHY STRUGGLES CONTINUE FOR YELTZ

### HALESOWEN 0 ROMULUS 1

HALESOWEN'S five-year wait for an FA Trophy win continued as Romulus ended their interest in the competition.

Sutton Coldfield-based Romulus ply their trade at an equivalent level to Halesowen within the Evo-Stik Northern league structure but had previously made a poor start to their season, without any away league victories so far.

But the visitors snatched an early lead and Halesowen then found it an uphill struggle to reply in the attempt to meet Leamington in the next round. The cause was not helped by the late dismissal of Brendan Kelly, with the unexpected defeat meaning yet another season without any FA competition prize income of any sort.

In the opening 10 minutes, Peter Folkes handed Romulus the first corner of the game and Marvin Johnson's 30 yard shot flew wide.

Romulus claimed the solitary goal as early as the 15th minute when poor defensive play allowed Johnson to

cross from the right and the towering Nathan Blissett worked free to head home.

As Halesowen came into the game, ex-Yeltz goalkeeper Chris Jay collected a bobbling effort from Andrew Westwood in the 19th minute. Justin Nisbett then did well down the right but Mark Smith's resultant shot was blocked.

Midway through the first half, home keeper Paul Evans recovered from a weak clearance to make a good save with his chest from Chris Morris and, at the other end, Michael McGrath struck a free-kick straight at the defensive wall.

### Equaliser

Livewire Nisbett saw his dangerous cross hacked away for a corner by Richard Robinson after 35 minutes.

Jay completed a superb reflex save by flicking the ball up and away after Arshad first won a corner and then met McGrath's 39th-minute corner kick.

The Yeltz improved further after the interval and Arshad went close to a

51st-minute equaliser when he beat goalkeeper Jay to Kelly's long ball and hooked the ball towards an empty net.

However, defender Jemiah Richards recovered to turn the ball around the post.

Seconds later, McGrath struck the outside of the post from 25 yards but home goalkeeper Evans kept Halesowen in the game with his brilliant 53rd minute save, denying Robinson.

As Halesowen's urgency intensified, Nisbett's superb 20-yard curling effort was clawed out from under the bar by Jay in the 64th minute.

After 67 minutes Nisbett's cheeky back-heel rebounded for substitute Nathan Jackson but he blazed over the bar.

Halesowen's hopes ended when Kelly was dismissed for a clumsy 72nd minute lunge on Nathan Walker.

**Halesowen Town:** Evans, Smith, Kelly, Folkes, Godwin, McGrath, Westwood, Saunders (Gaines 79), Arshad (N. Jackson 61), Nisbett, Gueyres (Hinds 51).

**Subs not used:** Coward, Reid.  
**Romulus:** Jay, Robert Evans, Richard Evans (Forde 89), Richards (Evans 58), Robinson, Day, Walker, Johnson, Blissett, Morris, Powis. Unused Subs not used: Lee, A. Jackson, Exhall.

## Early strike sets Rangers on way

### HASBURY RANGERS 3 NETHERTON COLTS 2

HASBURY started brightly in the first round of Stourbridge league cup preliminary round under 13s and took a well-deserved lead with Bailey Blackford heading in off a corner early on.

The rest of the half then belonged to Netherton. They got back into the game when a floated ball into the box was headed home before the advancing keeper.

Hasbury, not really upping their game and pressure after conceding, then went behind when a free kick was hit high into the net.

Hasbury rang the changes at half time and their pressure took when George Taylor ended his fantastic solo run with an unstoppable thundering a shot.

As Netherton tired Jimmy Williams settled the game when he rocketed in a free kick from 25 yards.

## Heathens' fans have chance to quiz bosses

HEATHENS fans can have their say on next year's team plans when club bosses Nigel Pearson and Will Pottinger appear at a winter forum on Friday, November 25.

The club are keen to take questions from supporters and get feedback on who they'd like to see in the 2012 side for the former Cradley club. It's the first time the fans have been given the chance to have their say and the event takes place at the club's Cradley Heath Liberal Club base, starting at 8pm.

Chairman Pearson said: "Obviously a lot will depend on what the points limit is likely to be and how many teams will be in the National League. But the reason we are laying down plans for a third season is simple - our supporters."

"Right now we have no firm news on the search for a suitable site for a new stadium, but we have people in the background who are working on things and hopefully we will eventually realise our dream."

"In the meantime we are pushing ahead with 2012 because the supporters deserve it. They have backed us in big numbers once again and there is no way we can walk away from this project having taken it this far."

"And we want to get the views of the supporters. I've attended many of these events with Wolverhampton and they are always very enjoyable nights, the Wolves fans turn out in big numbers to fire questions at their management and I'm sure the same will apply with ourselves."

Admission for the event is £2 on the door and it all starts at 8pm.

### Admits

Pearson admits the Heathens season turned sour thanks to injury problems - but he also believes some riders didn't progress as expected. "We are working with young British riders and you have to give them margin for error but some of our performances were poor," he said. "We could and should have done better. But we have given opportunities to the youngsters and hopefully they will benefit from that next season."

"We have had so many text messages from National League riders who want to come and ride for the Heathens because they can see what a buzz there is about the place on a Tuesday night."

Heathens are also planning to launch 2012 season ticket sales soon, including for the first time a child season ticket for just £25 which is ideal for a Christmas present.

And the club have had 100 limited edition Greg Hancock prints delivered featuring his world title glory and his time in Heathens colours. These will be available at the end of season party on November 4 and at the forum.

Hancock, already crowned world champion for a second time, rounded off his season in the best possible way with victory in Saturday's Polish Grand Prix.

He topped the charts with 11 points as rain forced an early abandonment in Gorzow, with Nicki Pedersen second and Emil Sayfutdinov third. The 41-year-old American ace claimed his second world crown fully 14 years after his first, and also cleaned up by taking league titles with all four of his clubs this year.

The former Cradley Heathens star triumphed in Poland with Zielona Gora, Sweden with Piraterna, Denmark with Slangerup and also threw in a Czech title with Mseno for good measure.

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